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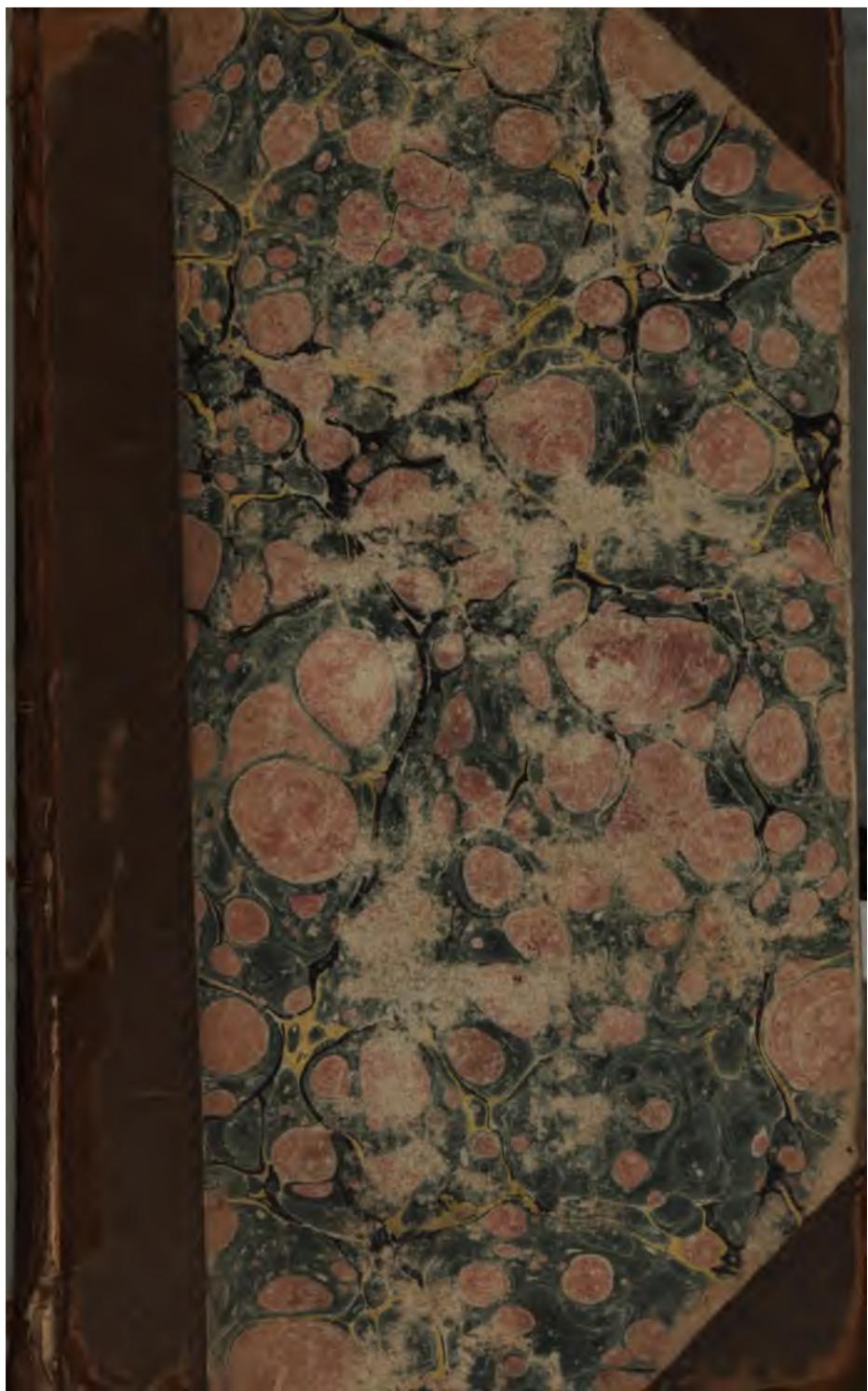
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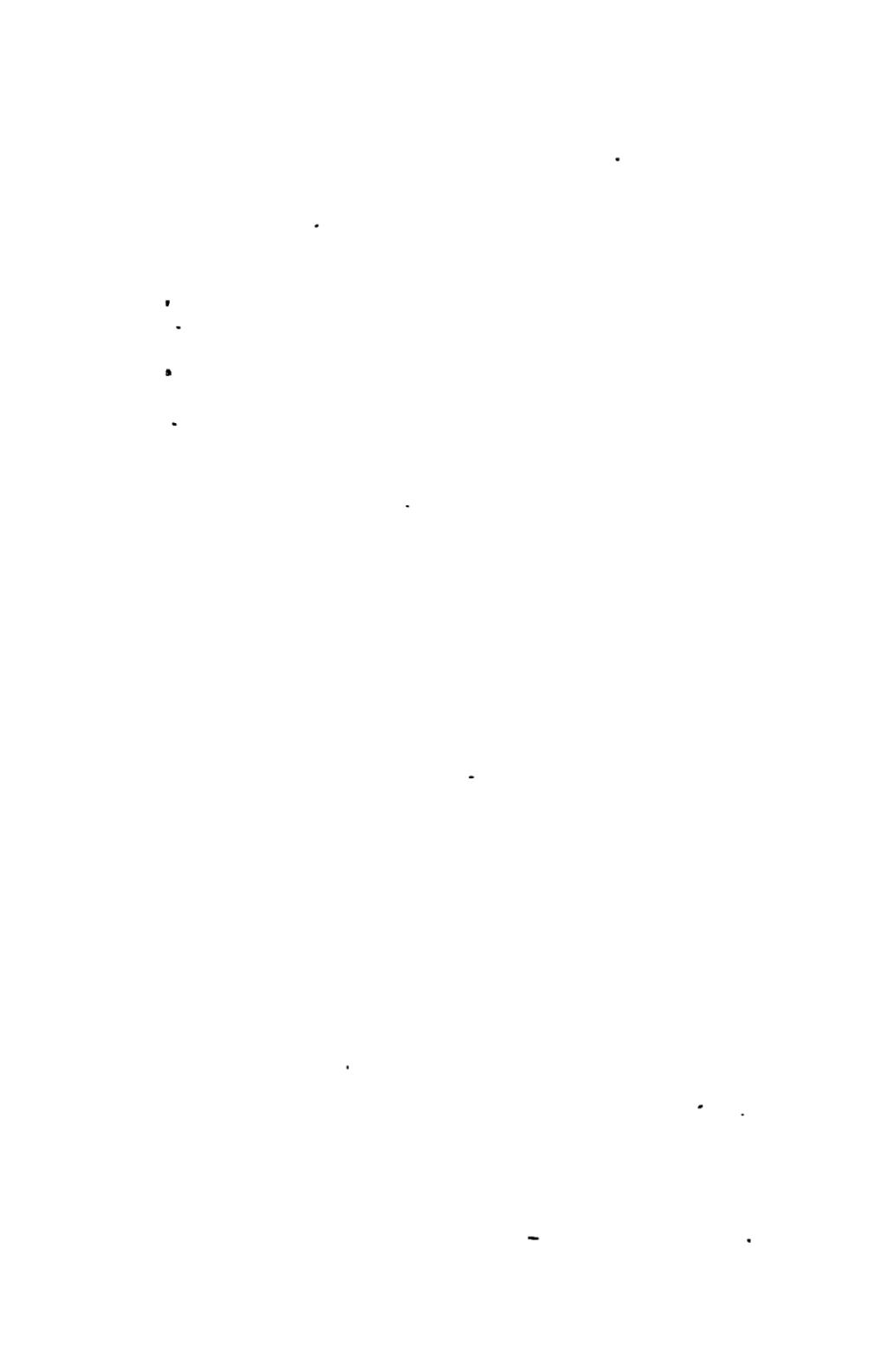
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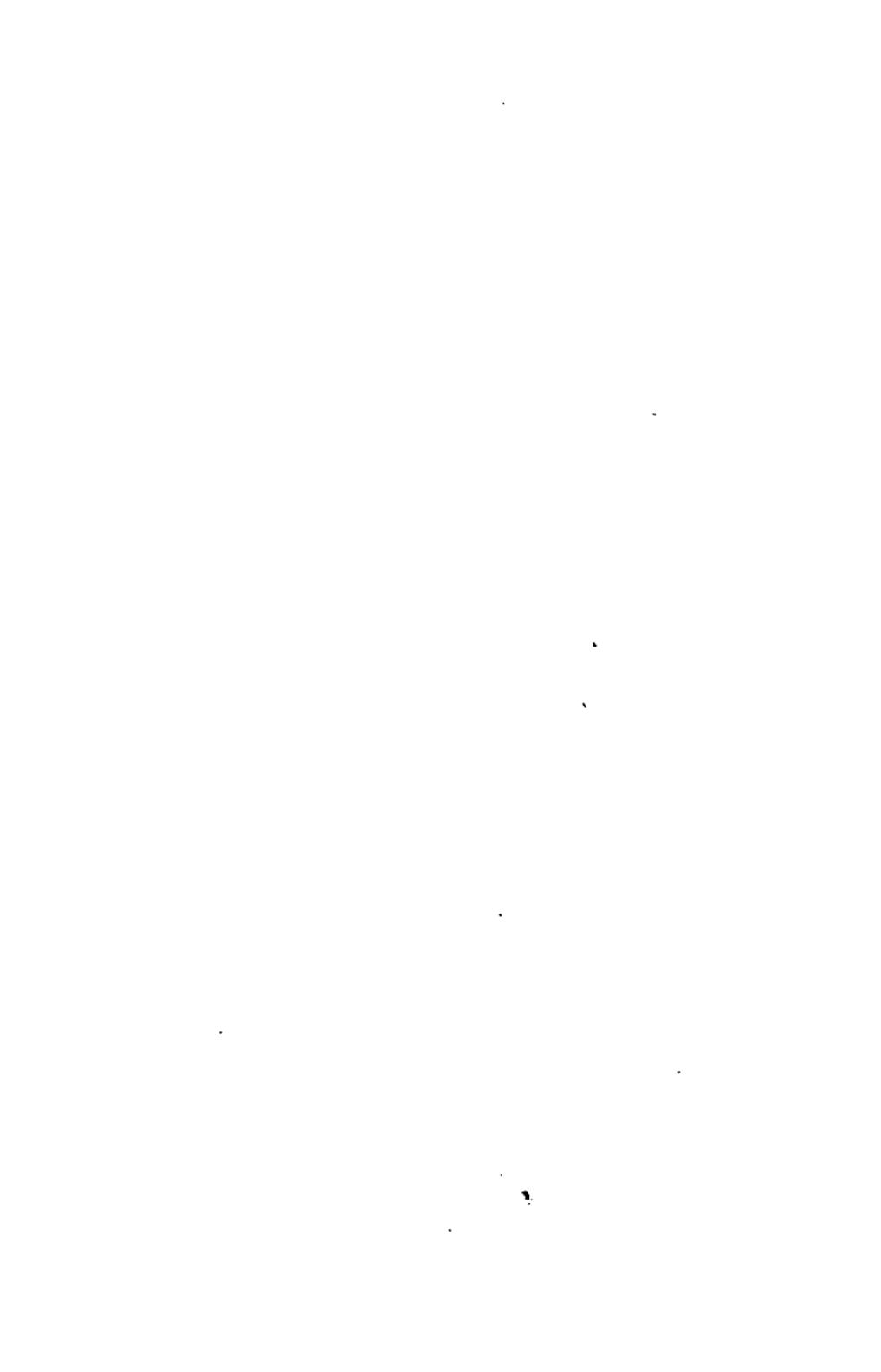




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THE VALLIES;
OR,
SCENES AND THOUGHTS
PROM
SECLUDED LIFE.

VOL I.

A

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THE VALLIES;

OR,

SCENES AND THOUGHTS

FROM

SECLUDED LIFE.

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“A quiet journey of the heart in pursuit of Nature, and those affections which arise out of her; which make us love each other and the world better than we do.”

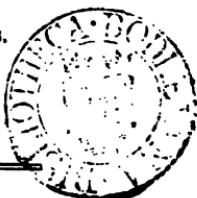
STERNE.

—

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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1827
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P R E F A C E.

TO MY EXCELLENT FRIEND

THE LADY SUSAN TEMPEST,

OF

RYDARE, IN THE COUNTY OF —.

THE constant flow of kindness
which hath ever distinguished your
conduct towards me since I was first
honoured with the regard of your
worthy family, makes every request
of your's imperative. I have returned
by the carrier, the packet which you

forwarded for my inspection, and you will find, on perusing the transcript which I have made of some portion of the contents, that your wishes, with regard both to the revision and the arrangement of the papers, have been as strictly complied with, as circumstances would admit of. I regret that a deficiency of materials, more especially in domestic detail, necessarily causes, notwithstanding all my endeavours to prevent it, some occasional abruptness in the commencement of the narrative, (if it may be so called;) nor with all due deference to your friend, do I think that his suggestion as to the selection being published under the title of “Letters,” judicious, inasmuch as

the fragments of Mr. Basil Tempest's diurnalia have furnished the greater proportion of the matter which I have thought proper to transcribe. Most sincerely do I join you in the prayer, that the contents of the following pages may be attended with that blessing to those who peruse them, which it is their *sole object* to communicate. The gradual awakening of the soul to religious truth, and the struggles of christian principle with worldly privation and discomfort, ever afford a noble and animating spectacle ; nor do I think that a more useful picture can be presented to the view of mankind, than religion influencing action, and exerting itself to over-

come or regulate the wayward impulses of the heart.

Believe me always,

Most Honoured Lady,

Your Ladyship's obedient

Servant and Friend,

THE VALLIES ;
OR,
SCENES AND THOUGHTS
FROM
SECLUDED LIFE.

ARCHDEACON HASTINGS TO MR. TEMPEST.

Rynam

YOU enquire how and where I spend my life, and you are kind enough to regret that we do not continue that intercourse in our latter years which shed so many flowers over our youthful path. Perhaps it is well that things are arranged as they are. Had I, on my entrance into life, been exalted into that high and dignified station which you sustain with so much honour and credit, my principles might have yielded to the temptations of ambition, or the allurements of pleasure : my enjoyments might have rested solely

on matters of mere worldly concern, and, with all the external means of happiness in my grasp, I might have sunk into that most abject of all servitudes—the slavery to my passions. To every man is not meted out an equal share of natural sagacity and discretion; and they are truly unfortunate, who, raised by birth and fortune to the pinnacle of power, totter and grow giddy for want of stability to keep the proper balance. In the humbler walks of life is the surest and the most easy footing, and the reptile may crawl on unmolested in the secure possession of its allotted goods, heedless of that storm which alarms its winged and more aspiring neighbour, or even dashes it lifeless on the soil.

The great have to pay a heavy penalty for that superiority which they maintain over their fellow creatures. If they can control the fortunes of others, seldom are they the perfect masters of their own motions. He who rules the public, must in some degree be the slave of his very dependants; and those whose high rank and station force them out much into the world,

can scarcely be said to have true enjoyment of themselves. It is wonderful how a good Providence orders all things for the best of ends ! and it is cheering to every individual of the human race to reflect how equal and upright are His dispensations. Thus it is with you and with me. We deserted the fostering shades of collegiate life about the same period, having drank with equal avidity of the deep waters of science. Our farewell on that occasion witnessed the severing of our future fortunes, as well as the extinction of that equality which we had maintained unbroken from boyhood to man's more sober estate. You launched into life a rich and gilded pinnace, and dashed along the bosom of the ocean as if the waves themselves were at your control. I, a small and fragile boat, ventured from harbour with caution and with fear, and crept along the coast, unheeded indeed, but with quiet and security.

Thanks to the superintending care of Providence, we are both of us still pursu-

ing our course. Me, obscurity hath hitherto sheltered from the greater evils of life ; you, prudence and foresight, but most of all, I am convinced, strong principles of religious obligation, and a dependence upon Him who ordereth the course of the mighty winds, have enabled to steer with comparative safety on your perilous voyage ; and shaken as you have often been with the storm, and with the tempest, again to recover and right your shattered bark.

May you be ever so preserved ! From my retreat have I watched your progress in life with unabated interest ; and believe me, the feelings of thirty years ago are still existing, and with equal ardour, in my breast. You complain of being weary of living for others ; you sigh over the blindness, the fickleness, and the ingratitude of mankind ; you express your anxiety to withdraw for a while from the bustle of the world ; and you wish me to describe the nature of that shelter which I am enabled to afford. I will tell you ;

and if you are satisfied, come and receive my welcome.

In me the wise man's wish is exemplified: I have neither "poverty nor riches*." Contentment cheers my dwelling, and that is more than wealth. By proper economy, that is, not by denying others, but occasionally ourselves, the conclusion of each year adds something to our store; for not to provide against contingencies is the part of folly. My house, in itself sufficiently convenient, is so situated as to command many of the bounties, and much of the beauties of nature; and I may venture to assert, that if you can submit to our simple habits, and condescend to our humble fare, our rambles among the neighbouring hills will at once invigorate and delight you. But come and make trial of us. The memory of times gone by can at least be revived; and if in the difference of our mode of life here you can find no gratification, and the stimulus you seek is wanting, at least you will return to the

* Prov. xxx. 8.

outstretched arms of gaiety, and the toilsome walks of ambition, more satisfied with the state appointed you by Providence, and more disposed to seek for happiness in your accustomed pleasures and employments.

** The Brynn, November.*

OUR autumn, I fear, is over ; and for the last few days we have been almost confined to the house. A gleam of sun, however, tempted me out yesterday, and I extended my walk as far as Rynan. What a lamentable havoc do a few days of storm make in the appearance of the country at the close of this interesting season. It is not a week ago since I was rambling amongst the woods that so luxuriantly fringe the border of the lake, and admiring the mellow and varied tints of the foliage which still overshadowed us in thick, and sometimes impenetrable, masses. The little streams that enliven each rocky glen, and irrigate the green meadows of our domain, still played gently and timidly within their time-worn channels ; and at intervals the reviving note of some little

* This letter, and all those dated from "the Brynn," are from the pen of Miss Mary Hastings, the youngest daughter of the Archdeacon, who, at this period, was residing with her relation, Lady Allyn.

songster told the plaintive story of a summer fled. In fact, it was just the turn of the most delightful of the seasons ; most delightful, because most contemplative. It is a season when we are neither disturbed by the bustle of employment within, nor the howling of the storm without :— nature seems here to pause for a moment, and having yielded up to man the destined stores for his subsistence and enjoyment, allows him an interval for meditation and thankfulness. And man *would* always thus employ it, were we not an ungrateful race.

But I was remarking the sudden change which a few days have made in our situation. Winter, with his advanced guard of fogs, sweeping clouds, and blustering gales, has rushed at once upon our peaceful vallies, like some mighty and irresistible conqueror. The aged oaks that shelter our mansion are stripped of their honours, and extend their lusty arms naked to the blast ; while every sloping bank, and opening vista, present a melancholy carpet, composed of the sear and yellow leaf.

The hollow whistling of the wind mingles with the hoarser roar of our mountain streams, swelled into torrents ; and the flocks, leaving their inaccessible haunts, seek the shelter of the vale, and consort with the less ambitious herds. I have a peculiar delight in marking the progress and decline of the seasons, and as I find its appropriate pleasures in each, I seldom indulge in many sighs for that which is gone. In winter, certainly, I find one disadvantage here, for which all the fire-side delights, did I possess them, which poets are so fond of painting, could scarcely make me amends,—I mean the society of my friends at Rynan. The Laplander is not more completely confined to his cabin, nor the North American Indian to his wig-wam, than we are to the walls of this old mansion during the winter months ; and were it not that I have been accustomed from childhood to depend somewhat upon my own resources for amusement, I might really be induced to imagine myself quite miserable.

You do indeed enquire, how I can pos-

sibly endure my situation here? There is a virtue in necessity. Besides, to those accustomed to seclusion as I am, there is a something not unpleasing at times, in a lonely and wild companionship with nature, even though clad as she now is, in her rudest and most repulsive garb. If we can abstract our ideas from the world moving around us, and contemplate the changing scene, not as it affects ourselves, but as a magnificent display of creative power and wisdom, new sensations will arise in our bosoms; the more grovelling considerations of comfort or discomfort, of liveliness or gloom, of profit or loss, will banish, and we shall look with the same interest, and with almost equal pleasure, upon the more tempestuous, as upon the more serene operations of the Deity.

And is it not in this light that we should view all that passes around us? The cloudless calm of a summer's day—the awful wildness of the wintry storm—the invigorating freshness of the morning, and the sombre gloom of evening—the beaming splendour of noon-day, and the still

darkness of the night—all these things, with the other never-ceasing varieties of nature, should be rather viewed and admired as parts of a mighty and compact system, which we cannot comprehend altogether, but which is working for the best of ends, than, as is sometimes the case, be made the subject of insolent complaint.

How weak and foolish—nay, how dangerous does it not appear, to fret ourselves with that which cannot be remedied, and presumptuously to cavil at what we cannot understand? On this ground it is that I would never make the external arrangements of Providence a matter of complaint, nor arraign them in the minutest particular. “O Lord, how manifold are thy works; in wisdom hast thou made them all.” Moreover, so thoroughly am I convinced of the excellence of the Deity, that I tutor my mind to view all his operations with pleasure and with gratitude; certain that with Him, means the most apparently harsh and unpleasant, all conduce to some good and beneficial end. Thus, to carry the subject further, in every

change, whether manifested in the heavens or on the earth, whether abroad or at home, whether affecting others or myself, be it fortunate or adverse, welcome or unwelcome, I have ever been taught to regard it as a divine dispensation, and to whisper to my soul what the magicians said unto Pharoah, "This is the finger of God *." Such is my solace and support ; and impressed with these principles, and looking, as every Christian ought, beyond this present scene, we have a powerful weapon against all the vicissitudes and discomforts of life ; and truly, to one situated as I am, the value of such an acquisition is inestimable.

I returned home this evening, and found all as usual. The same formal welcome, the same detail of accumulated cares, and the long list of grievances. I never so sensibly feel the hardships of these things as when I have been with my dear friends at Rynan. How different are the two houses ! In the one appears religion softening the temper, regulating

* Exod. viii. 19.

the actions and the heart ; in the other is visible the pride of life, and that whole herd of evils attendant upon mere wordly and selfish views. I know this comparison will surprise you, because there is no where a more rigid devotee than my aunt. There is not a saint in the calendar whose day is not observed with all due decorum ; not a fast nor a festival that is not noted, and though not of the Romish Church, yet during the season of Lent her religious exercises are incessant, and the popish laws of self-denial are most strictly insisted upon without any exemptions.

Yet how often is it the case that external observances have of themselves no effect upon the heart ! We are informed in many parts of Scripture, that it is not by these that we can prove the reality of our faith, or the sincerity of our repentance. When undertaken in a right spirit they are certainly helps to holiness, but surely our main endeavour ought to be, by inward struggles with the corruptions of our nature, to attain that charity, “ that

invaluable Christian principle, which is declared greater even than faith itself, and without which we are nothing."

I had a delightful visit at Rynan, and our family circle was both enlarged and enlivened with the addition of the secretary* and his son. I shall write to you again soon ; meanwhile allow me to suspend my opinion of these distinguished visitors of our mountains. First impressions are frequently of little value.

* Mr. Tempest, who at this time held a high situation under the Government.

THE ARCHDEACON TO THE BISHOP OF —

Rynan, December.

ENCLOSED you will receive my quarterly return of the affairs political, civil and moral, of my little commonwealth, and if you find nothing therein novel or surprising, there will at least be what is satisfactory to you, as the supreme spiritual guide of so large and important a diocese. This is no age of miracles, and the Christian teacher must not expect to triumph at once over prejudice and ignorance by the mere outstretching of his arm, or the first warnings of his voice, but trusting solely to his own perseverance in well-doing, aided by the grace of God, he must sow the seed diligently, nor be surprised if it is at first tardy in bearing fruit. Paul may plant, Apollos may water, but it is God giveth the increase, for we are but labourers under him and with him. And this is my comfort, and a kind of talisman against disappointments in the exercise of my spiritual functions.

I had hoped that you would have honoured my dwelling with your presence this autumn, and that you would yourself have inspected the improvements (God grant that they may prove such) which I have set on foot for the further amelioration of the condition of my poor mountaineers. On this subject I have thought much, and to enlighten my mind further, have been perusing the account given by the Père de Charlevoix of the Jesuitical mission in Paraguay. There is however too much secular feeling and ambition mingled with their otherwise excellent plans—too manifest a desire to graft their own power upon the increasing civilization of the people, to render the adoption of their system perfectly consistent with christian charity and meekness.

“*Non nobis sed omnibus*” was the favourite maxim of one of the brightest ornaments* of our church, and the great success of his disinterested efforts for the good of the poor and half civilized population com-

“Not for ourselves, but for the community.”—Br. WILSON.

mitted to his charge, proves beyond volumes of argument, that this, his system, may be as effectual in practice, as it is beautiful in theory. Much that is specious may certainly be advanced in support of the Jesuitical plan. The labourer truly is worthy of his hire, and the earthly stimulus of present power and aggrandizement may urge men to an extent of exertion, of which, alas! purer principles too seldom prove themselves capable.

Your question concerning oral instruction amongst the poor I have considered, but am not prepared to give any decisive opinion. There are many things of which experience only can inform us correctly. Were the corruptions of our nature fewer, or less intermixed with every propensity of the heart—had we less natural presumption, and could the mind in all cases be brought to discriminate between the merely sipping and the deeply drinking of the cup of science, I should at once pronounce in favour of the more extended communication of knowledge to the peasantry; such, however, as

we are by nature, it appears at least a fair matter for deliberation.

The progress of intellect it is, nevertheless, no longer in our power to check, even were we so disposed. In this the finger of God is manifested; and who will venture to resist what is plainly his sovereign decree? Knowledge and liberty of thought, like a mighty tide, are seen advancing, and though with a sadly prophetic eye I foresee the overwhelming of much that is ancient and venerable, and dear to our prejudices, yet all has no doubt a relation to that final consummation of things which, inasmuch as it is proclaimed throughout the Holy Scriptures in terms too plain for misinterpretation, will most assuredly come to pass.

Taking, however, a mere temporal and abstracted view of the subject, at the same time that I think the dissemination of *religious* knowledge forms an insuperable obligation upon the enlightened members of a christian community, yet I confess that the extent to which some are fond of carrying instruction amongst

the mere labouring classes appears to me neither necessary, nor yet in any way expedient. It has ever been the propensity of mankind to run into pernicious extremes, and if some are condemned as narrow-minded and prejudiced for refusing their patronage to the further education of the poor, others I conceive may fairly be taxed with a zeal without knowledge in the extraordinary and superfluous, and in certain cases I may say, the *injurious* extent to which they carry their object.

After all, where the clergy do their duty—go about their parishes with a full determination of doing good—put themselves on a level, in spiritual matters, with the meanest members of their flock, by talking with them confidentially, affectionately, and mildly—by assisting them in their temporal concerns, and instructing them unceasingly in their spiritual—where, in fine, to use the words of St. Peter, they exhibit themselves not as “being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock ;” this is an excellent and a certain mode of in-

struction, which will include all ranks and all ages, and which will bring more fallen creatures to God, than all the instruction in mere science and literature, which liberality can devise.

I love oral instruction when delivered from the proper source, and have myself experienced the benefit of it. The plan I mention, so far from obstructing the general progress of knowledge, would promote it; but what is of still greater importance, it would regulate and throw it into a proper channel, and many of those distant evils might thus be avoided, which to some are so dreadful in prospect. The catechism constantly taught and explained—the word of God often read, and simply commented upon—the leading doctrines of our faith, and the great moral duties earnestly and anxiously inculcated—and to crown all, the silent lesson of a good example, (for, as the judicious Hooker was wont to say, “the life of a pious clergyman is a visible rhetoric”)—these things, I am convinced, would, under the blessing of God, ensure as

quiet and orderly a parish, and secure salvation to as many, as any other system which the great extension of modern ideas could recommend for general adoption.

I am firmly convinced, without being any enemy to the former, that neither reading nor writing, nor any other mere human accomplishment, are necessary to salvation; and, in my opinion, the peasant who listens reverently to his duty, and as reverently endeavours to perform it, is in all respects as good a Christian as he who reads it; nor is he overlooked by the provident eye of his Creator, because he is devoid of an acquisition, from the frequent use of which his situation must necessarily debar him. One thing I am decided upon: where reading is universally taught in a parish, the duty of those promoters of education is but half done, if their vigilance extends no further than the precincts of the school-room. Having committed to the dependant members of their community a powerful weapon of evil or of good, let them take care, as far

as lies in their power, that it is properly wielded. Their relaxation in this particular, would, in many instances, convert the gift of their good-will into a positive injury, and what was intended to be the greatest blessing into the surest curse. *These things are awful and perplexing considerations.*

But in the interest of my desultory discussion I had nearly forgotten to inform you, that our old friend the Secretary, accompanied by his son, are at present inmates at Rynan. His plea in seeking the retirement of these vallies is ostensibly a wish to relax for a short interval from his arduous duties; but I cannot help indulging the idea, that this apparent whim has some deeper design. He never had the character of a trifler, and his bold and energetic spirit avoided quiet and inactivity under almost any circumstances, as a positive evil. I am sorry it is not in your power to give him the meeting here, for though I do my best to entertain him, and make the ~~irs~~ pass on pleasantly, yet I fear that

the simplicity and plainness of my habits render me but a dull companion for the politest courtier of the day.

The Secretary's foible is ambition, and I can plainly perceive, that the converse he is here obliged to hold with Nature has no elevating effect upon his spirits. It is long since we met, and I observe with a sigh, how often the mere foibles of youth increase with years, while, alas! all that openness of manner and gaiety of heart, which are so delightful in early companionship, frequently fade in the autumn of life, like the foliage of a goodly tree. Not that by this I would insinuate any thing disparaging to my friend; for after an absence of thirty years, it is vain to expect all the pleasing qualities of earlier days; and even those we are apt in retrospect to exaggerate. The Secretary has still the same goodness of heart; but then, his mind is absorbed in the cares of the world; and when he first arrived here, he appeared to think it almost a dereliction of duty to lend his attention to other objects than those he had left, or in-

dulge in any feelings foreign to his public pursuits.

The change certainly was great from the bustle of politics, and the gaieties of a court, to the unvarying stillness and tranquillity of our mountain scenes, and the simplicity and regularity of our domestic arrangements. Custom, however, is all-powerful, and I fancy our guest has begun lately to rouse himself into some participation of our pursuits.

MR. BASIL TEMPEST TO HIS ELDEST SISTER.

Rynan.

I BEGIN to be somewhat more reconciled to my lot here; and as my return to town is uncertain, I will not defer the description of my situation, under the idea of being soon able to give it personally. You never saw the Archdeacon. I wish, however, you could know him, for he is no common character. To say more than that in appearance he is venerable, in disposition mild and sincere, and in manner the real Christian gentleman, would sound like mere panegyric. His actions and his words can alone correctly pourtray him. He pretends to none of those striking characteristics, which would glow and sparkle in the pen of an eloquent biographer. To designate him as “blameless, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; one that ruleth well his own house,” would be perfectly correct. St. Paul thus describes what a bishop ought to be, and

our friend is indeed the true apostolical bishop of these vallies. Rynan is the ancient patrimony of his house. His domain is extensive; but the country is poor and thinly populated, and markets so distant, that most of his produce is retained for home-consumption. Yet how shall I describe the romantic beauty of this secluded spot? When my eyes first gazed upon these lovely, pastoral scenes, scarcely could I credit the reality of the objects around me. Nature seemed to riot in striking and novel combinations. Wildness and grandeur, softness and beauty, regularity and disorder, exist here in delightful contrast; and there is a freshness in the green pastures, and a limpid clearness in the numberless little streams, which at once refresh the eye and exhilarate the fancy.

But to give you a distant conception of our retreat, imagine a peaked and very lofty mountain rising to the skies, and connected with its opposite, but less aspiring neighbour, by a low and rocky ridge dividing two vallies, which encircle

its southern and eastern base. Than these vales, differing as they do in character, nothing can be imagined more picturesque; and as I stand upon the summit of the ridge, and view the mountains on each side of me, and the sweetly pastoral scenes they enclose, I am filled with a delight not unmixed with astonishment. Each of these vales has its lake, and a noisy stream, rising among the mountains to the north, at once supplies and carries off the waters of both, forcing its way from the one to the other, through a curious natural chasm, which penetrates the rocky barrier I have already mentioned.

The upper vale is called Brynn-Allyn, and the lower, in which the little capital of the district is situated, is designated Valley-Rynan, from the residence of our host, who is almost sole proprietor. This latter vale contains all those softened features, which have an indescribably pleasing effect, from the contrast which they exhibit to the surrounding scenes. The lake clear, oval in its shape, and with unbroken banks, lies tranquilly in the

fertile bosom of the vale, its gentle waters ever sporting on the verdant herbage, that fringes its very margin. No hedge, no unsightly boundary, appears on the whole circumference of the lake, but the banks gently sloping on every side, present one continued tract of smooth pasture, peopled with flocks and lowing herds, and ornamented here and there with the spreading foliage of the majestic oak.

The mansion of Rynan is situated on the northern extremity of the vale. It occupies the summit of a verdant knoll, sheltered behind by a lofty range of hills, finely wooded, and commanding in front the lake, the towering peaks of the Rhudol, (for so is the huge monarch of these mountains called); and at the further extremity of the vale, the village, with its ivied tower and its embowering trees.

It is the most perfect view that I ever beheld, uniting in itself the extremes of beauty and sublimity, and possessing almost every accompaniment which the

pencil of the most finished artist could devise. The house is altogether most conveniently, as well as agreeably situated. The stream which connects the lakes, issues from its gloomy embouchure a few hundred yards above the knoll, and making an elegant curve through the grounds, flows in a serpentine direction to the lake, carrying life and fertility in its progress.

As I stand and gaze upon these things, and as in my various rambles here, I meet with spots almost equally interesting and desirable, I am tempted to wonder at the depraved taste of man, rather choosing, like the ancient Lot, the flat plains of the east, than casting their eyes towards the equally fertile, but more beautiful valleys of the hills.

It is curious to observe, that in our country, those districts where nature has most exerted her powers of beautiful and sublime combination, are generally most neglected and least peopled by man. In this, let us hope accident has a great share. Commerce has no eye for the

picturesque, and amongst a mercantile and money-getting nation, that district is most desirable, where their object can be most conveniently attained; yet in the operations of nature, beauty and utility are by no means incompatible. The boldest mountain and the sweetest valley may be as rich in pastoral and mineral treasures, as the most shapeless hill or the most swampy plain; and as we know that such is really the case, we again repeat, that it must arise in some measure from accidental circumstances, that while many a bleak and unpromising region is peopled and improved, others, possessing superior beauties, and even claiming not inferior advantages, are suffered to remain neglected and desolate.

But it is time to resume my subject. The sublimity of this mountain region, I will not attempt to describe. If with Job I enquire, when contemplating the mighty obstacles through which the waters force their way, “Who hath divided a water-course for the flowing of rivers?” so may I ask, in an equal strain

of awful wonder, who raised the lofty summits of the mountains, and who built the rocky bulwarks by which their sides are girt and supported?

In cities we gaze upon the works of art with curious and delighted eye. The magnificent and elevated domes on the ancient towers and tapering minarets of our ecclesiastical structures—the Gre-cian elegance and simplicity of our more secular buildings—the breadth, the length, the handsome uniformity of our streets—all these excite our admiration, and we observe with inward satisfaction what the united power of man can effect. But what are all these, thrown together, compared with even the most puny of the efforts of nature? Could the most cunning artist create the meanest shrub—nay, even the very daisy upon which he treads? What then should be his humiliation on comparing his designs with the sublime tracings of the finger of creative wisdom? It is amid scenes like these, that I now traverse, that man learns his own level—that his thoughts are irresist-

bly withdrawn from himself and his species to more awful considerations and to higher views; for in proportion as his own comparative helplessness and dependence is apparent, so do his ideas range towards that invisible—that incomprehensible Power by whose hand he was formed and placed in this sphere, and on whose will alone hang his present and his future fate.

I pity those who spend their years from childhood unto age amid the busy haunts of men. They may read—they may hear of the sublimities of nature—they may admire at a distance the majesty of God—but unless they frequent scenes like these, they cannot adequately feel it.

Yet how long have I been ignorant of those emotions, which I am now convinced are the purest and sublimest of our nature! Never did I before know how intimately man is connected with his Maker. In the continual contemplation of his perfections and his works lies man's most acceptable worship, and con-

sists his noblest employment. By this is the closest union drawn betwixt the Creator and the created ; and by this, in proportion to the enlargement of the mind, are our capabilities increased of unshackling ourselves from mere earthly views and prejudices, and approaching day by day nearer to the eternal throne.

The Brynn, December.

IT is during this gloomy season, that I feel peculiar pleasure and consolation in exercising my epistolary vein. When objects without are lifeless and inaccessible—when scenes within are neither interesting nor exhilarating—when the mind is fatigued with its own contemplations—then it is delightful to withdraw the thoughts from domestic cares, and suffer them to travel towards those distant friends whom we love.

O friendship! thou most valuable and excellent gift of a beneficent Creator, to thee how much am I not indebted for the majority of those pleasures which I am permitted to possess!

When sorrows swell the tempest high,
Thou, a kind port, art ever nigh;
And since thy choice is always free,
I bless thee for thy smiles on me.

Yes! the consciousness that I have one being that loves me—one, not bound by

the ties of blood—but who esteems me for myself, is a thought so exhilarating, so grateful to my wearied spirits, that most anxiously do I pray, that I may never have to lament the deprivation of this. A moralist has asserted, that friendship is a mere traffic, wherein self-love always proposes to be the gainer. It might indeed appear so in the present case, for truly I am a very considerable gainer. Yet I feel, as far at least as I am concerned, that the moralist is in the wrong. Chance, not intention, has made me the gainer. I should not abate in the warmth of my feelings, were I an actual loser.

Among men, generally speaking, friendship may be justly defined a traffic, a mere exchange of good offices, and which is too often regulated both as to its nature and duration, by the prospect of profit or loss. Women are decidedly less selfish; they are satisfied with less substantial returns, and as they are more domestic and less ambitious, their affections are not so liable to be withdrawn by fresh objects

and allurements—nor are they, which is of no little importance, so often put to the proof. “A faithful friend,” says the wise son of Sirach, “is a strong defence, and he that hath found such an one, hath found a treasure. A faithful friend is the medicine of life, and they that fear the Lord shall find him.”

How wise was it in the Creator of the universe to ordain, that friendship should be one reward of virtue. There is truly in our endeavours to adhere strictly even to our mere social virtues, so much self-denial to exercise—so many little weaknesses to overcome—so many foolish risings of the heart to check, that it was a gift of infinite mercy, so to regulate congenial souls, that they might form a union of esteem cemented by affection, and thus in their stormy passage through life be to each other a mutual consolation and support.

How sensibly do I feel the excellence of this gift, and I sometimes persuade myself that it is granted, not because I am virtuous—I arrogate no such proud distinction to my humble endeavours—

but that it may encourage me in my attempts after well-doing—that it may uphold my tottering resolutions, and by giving me cause of thankfulness to my Creator on one account, make me more resigned to all the rest of his dispensations.

The Brynn is at present more than usually uninviting. In the spring and summer and autumn I have my little out-door occupations, and a number of rural pleasures which serve to withdraw my mind for the time from all unavailing regrets, and, by their silent fascinations, lull me into composure, and even happiness. The garden, the wild and romantic walks in our vicinity, the routine of agricultural pursuits which I watch with interest; but above all, my occasional visits to my dear home—I must ever call Rynan such—being the sum total of all my external sources of pleasure, are now withdrawn—when the severity of the season, the gloominess of the skies, and the weariness of confinement, render them most desirable: It is at such times that I feel

most sensibly the privilege of unburthening my thoughts on the bosom of friendship; and if I do not always write in a cheerful strain, nay, if my letters are too frequently unreasonably gloomy, you must remember, that I devote those hours to you, which more peculiarly need so cheering an occupation; and as you are aware, that my *lips* are ever shut to complaints and repinings, so do I feel assured that you will be indulgent to the occasional waywardness of my *pen*.

Though I perfectly agree with the poet, that “sorrow hath less power to bite the man that mocks it,” yet I have not fortitude on all occasions to think my state the happiest, nor can I allure my fancy to throw so forcible a spell over my reason as to blind it altogether to the positive evils of my condition. My favourite maxim of considering every thing as subject to the immediate cognizance of Providence, and that by him in his wisdom even the most trivial events of our lives are arranged, is certainly on many occasions a source of comfort, and a sti-

mulus to endurance, the value of which I most sensibly experience. Yet there are moments when the powers of sober reason seem to have lost somewhat of their wonted influence,—when the heart will not be controuled, and the feelings rebel against the judgment. Impatience usurps the place of resignation, and murmurings will escape, though I know they bear with them instant repentance, and future self-accusation.

It is to you alone that I reveal these things. I know the evils attendant upon querulousness and discontent; yet I need the occasional sympathy of friendship; and whilst I am resolved to make the best of circumstances, and employ my thoughts rather upon what is tolerable than what is hard in my lot, nevertheless I may without impropriety open my heart to you, and seek in your affection and encouragement that support and consolation, of which the innate weakness of our nature has but too frequent need, from every source from whence it may be derived. The galley slave who labours

within sight of his native mountains, and who knows that his friends and his cottage, and all his former comforts, are still there, is more wretched than his fellow-sufferer, who has no distant tie, no living affections to allure his thoughts, but whose attention, solely occupied by his situation, has leisure to glean the few alleviations which it may afford. It is on this very ground, if I may be allowed a comparison between positive wretchedness and mere social deprivation, that I would plead my own excuse. All my feelings—all my affections are centered in Rynan. I love its tranquillity, its employments, its quiet and rational pleasures. The blessing of God seems upon that house; his fear and his love are resident in the hearts, and influence the tempers of those within; whilst here, in the very sight almost of my natural home, to me there is nothing congenial; the voice of real affection never pours its soothing music within these halls, and the mild charities of religion never for a moment enlighten the pervading gloom.

Were I more distant from Rynan, perhaps it would be better. The opportunities of frequent contrast are by no means beneficial, for my mind, dwelling too much upon scenes and persons that I love, has scarcely leisure to accommodate itself to circumstances here. Yet, in truth, I had rather it should be so. I have now some positive pleasure; if I was to remove to a distance, I should barter it for what would never amount to more than mere passive endurance. But enough of this subject. I will revert to others of more interest.

In your suggestions concerning Mr. Basil Tempest, notwithstanding the almost unfavourable description I gave of him in my last, I can now perceive a proof of your superior discernment, and I feel quite chagrined at the hastiness of my conclusions. Circumstances have proved, that what I took for dullness or pride had its origin in sensibility. I was informed, in a note from my mother, of that strange turn in the fickle wheel of fortune, which has induced the Secretary

to resign his dignities, and to retire amid scenes too dreary and too solitary to be relished by a mind like his. The prospect of this, no doubt, weighed heavily upon the hearts of the father and the son. Anticipated evils are ever more oppressive than real ones, as hope is often more delightful than enjoyment.

How beneficial will the example and the suggestions of my father be to his guests, at this particular juncture! His own unbroken cheerfulness of heart has its origin in such pure Christian principles, that if they catch but a shadow of it, they will cease to esteem the world every thing. Indeed, it is no “abiding city;” and it is one of the incalculable benefits of our religion, that, while it does not deprive us of one single rational source of enjoyment, it arms us most effectually against all the evils and all the disappointments of life. By teaching us that life is but a journey—the mere threshold of our existence—that another and a better country awaits us—it blunts the pang of earthly sorrows, and buoys up the

spirits with hope and confidence, which would be otherwise miserably sunk and abject. “Truly, if in this life only we have hope, we are of all men the most miserable.”

I cannot think that independent of religion there can be any continuance of real happiness. The accidents, the changes, the surprizes of life are such, that without the certain hope of another forming an independent principle in the soul, it would be unable to meet the casualties of existence with firmness and composure: every change must create some pang, every sunrise upon some affliction, which meeting with no remedy from hope, must make an impression poignant and durable. The loss of power and wealth, the loss of friends, the absence of domestic peace, and the many other vexations of life, have a far different influence upon him whose eyes are fixed *beyond* this present scene, than upon the mere wordling, whose energies and whose hopes are confined to the passing moments, and who, therefore, has no shelter, no refuge of the soul when

the storm arises, and misfortune attacks his dwelling.

How truly do I feel the goodness of the Deity in this merciful dispensation! Would that I, as well as others, oftener profited by this invaluable conviction—these inestimable hopes. Not that they ever altogether fail me, for I feel convinced that to the influence of these considerations upon my mind, I owe the whole of that little fortitude and forbearance with which your kind indulgence has gifted me. That I may increase in these virtues, and thus rise in your esteem and my own, shall be my unceasing endeavour.

THE ARCHDEACON TO THE BISHOP OF —

Rynan.

I RECEIVED your Lordship's packet, and will convey your kind expressions to Mr. Tempest. In my last communication I believe I hinted that his retreating amongst these wilds must have some deeper cause than mere caprice; but I did not apprehend so extraordinary an event as the abrupt retirement from public service of one, whose character as a statesman, seemed above the reach of envy and detraction.

Though I now find that this event was not unexpected by our friend, yet this change in his fortunes at first so deeply affected him that for a short interval the passions of the man displayed themselves through the cold reserve and self-possession of the statesman. Mr. Tempest is proud, severe, and aristocratical. His mind cannot descend to keep pace with the increasing liberality, nor bend to the overpowering

freedom, I had almost said, factiousness of the times. His views are positive, his measures determined; and not choosing to sacrifice, or at least to relax his principles, he must submit to sacrifice his power.

You seem to think, that less general inflexibility, and a greater measure of conciliation towards the new-fangled prejudices of the times, might have placed him at the head of a powerful party, and secured him a munificent return for his many public services. Perhaps it might have been so, and flexibility towards public opinion, and an indulgence towards public folly, are in this our day, cried up, and overloaded with many injudicious commendations. Nevertheless, Mr. Tempest kept in view consistency. Thinking one way, he scorned to act another. He would not listen to clamour—he would not yield to present infatuation—but in times when the voice of the many pretends to exact the obedience of the few, he took for his moral the stern and unyielding virtues of those great men, to

whose firmness and unbending determination we owe the basis of our constitution.

I am not prepared to say that our friend's views were in every point unexceptionable. There are so many modes of attaining the same object, that the end, though similar, is frequently lost sight of in contentions about the means, and thus are the most excellent plans sometimes overthrown by foolish and idle opposition in comparatively indifferent matters. After all, even supposing his political inflexibility to be a public fault and a private misfortune, I am inclined to honour him for it. The secretary is, strictly speaking, "a church-and-king-man," and as such, perhaps too vehemently opposed to the very liberal sentiments of the day for his own private aggrandizement. In some of his views I can coincide. That liberal and dangerous policy, which would admit into the bosom of the executive government all the numberless ramifications of sectarianism, together with Papists, Socinians, deists, infidels, and heretics of every descrip-

tion, never had his heart-felt approval. Nor could he ever suffer himself to be convinced that those men are the true friends of their country, and least of all true supporters of the Protestant ascendancy, who would thus endanger that sway of uniformity, peace and good order, which it cost some of the best blood of our ancestors to secure. The visions of these liberalists appear to him to be futile; their plans full of plausibility, thinly hiding the real consequent danger; and he always argued, that should success attend their efforts, we shall have speedily to lament the overthrow of all that is venerable and national amongst us. "Can there be concord, will he frequently say—can there be unanimity in a goverment compounded of so many opposite and inflammable materials?" I honour my friend for his political inflexibility. A want of gravity and consistency amongst our leading characters, a disposition to compromise their real sentiments, to explain away their meanings, and to be in reality rather the

slaves than the upright servants of the public, give a startling blow to that confidence we ought to have in our public assemblies, and we are thus rendered incapable of calculating with certainty upon the continuance of any system of politics, however excellent it may be in itself. A false liberality, an imprudent indulgence of the prejudices of others, and a weak regard to intemperate clamour, have too often taken place of that unshaken firmness and manly confidence in their own judgments, which best become the aristocracy of a nation like this. There is such fickleness in mere public opinion—it is governed so lamentably by a venial or a licentious press—that the first upraisings of its voice will be but little regarded by the man conscious of the rectitude of his views. To him the cries of the discontented, the vulgar sneers and abuse of the factious, the ridicule of the disappointed and the envious, will be as the rejected scum of the ocean, to the rock that defies its wildest billows.

“Hard are the ways of truth, and

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rough to walk*," says one who knew to his cost the temptations and the difficulties of a political career. Often doth truth mar honour, and it is to the inward satisfaction which he experiences in acting sedulously and resolutely up to his own unbiassed dictates of what is right, that the honest man must look for the only reward he can insure to himself in this world. Truth is a bright ornament on the brow of a great man, but of this rare material are not all the steps in the ladder of advancement formed.

He that would rule his fellow-creatures, should possess a mind independent of them. "The children of men are deceitful upon the weights†." He should be fully convinced of the instability of their favour, and set not his heart upon popularity. If it attends his virtues, it is well, if not, never let him on that account swerve from his principles of right. It is a phantom that hath drawn many into pits and quagmires, and then left them to

* Milton.—Paradise Regained.

† Psalm lxii. 9.

feed upon the bitter fruits of their weakness and folly. A higher principle ought to direct the actions of him who affects the guidance and controul of his fellow-mortals. He should have ever before him the favour of God, and the approbation of his own conscience. He should embark upon the tempestuous sea of public life, resolute to perform his duty, avoiding all extremes as dangerous rocks, and fully prepared for opposition, disappointment, and even contumely. He should be on his guard against flattery and applause; he should despise threats, and use openness and candour as the only effective weapons against malice, envy, and detraction, and looking for no reward in this world, but rather affliction and sorrow, his eyes should be ever in secret directed to him who is the only true “shadow from the heat and refuge from the storm*.”

Many arguments of this nature have I already ventured to hint to our friend, and he perfectly acquiesces in their justice.

* Is. xxv. 4.

Yet when the whole soul has for years been wrapped up in mere wordly speculations—when the present state of being has been the sole object of regard—it is not the effort of a moment to recall the thoughts and fix them upon other, even higher views. It must be the work of time, and I shall not fail in this duty of friendship. There is in a retirement from mere wordly pleasures and pursuits, when the snows of age encompass the brow, and the passions subside as the reason strengthens, a dignity and a propriety which should be the object of more frequent choice. So great is my opinion of the self-satisfaction and incalculable benefit of thus withdrawing ourselves from the pride, the vanities, and the emptiness of the world in our later days, and endeavouring by meditation, and reading, and prayer, to fit ourselves for a nearer communion with our Creator, that I should pronounce that man supremely fortunate, the circumstances of whose condition will allow him thus to act. This happiness is in store for our friend, and I can anticipi-

pate the period when he will confess that there is mercy in this present dispensation. The world that he loved and courted hath disappointed him ; he may now seek a Master with whom there is “no variableness neither shadow of turning,” whose “foundation standeth sure,” and who gives to those servants who are faithful, an eternal reward.

* James, i. 17.

MR. BASIL TEMPEST TO HIS ELDEST SISTER.

Rynan.

I PROMISED to write to you from our retreat, and, unknown to my father, to satisfy your anxieties on his account. May God grant him a renewal of that peace of mind which he is at present far from possessing! I do not mean to say that he is positively unhappy, yet he is far from tranquil. The world he has left occupies his thoughts; and much do I fear that the experiment he has made during this short absence from it, only tends to increase his uneasiness, now that his resolve is beyond recall. Those high qualities of the soul which have ennobled him in his public career, seem to have lost much of their force in his solitude; and he, whose genius once seemed to rise superior to all obstacles, now shrinks at the idea of spending the remainder of his days at a distance from the busy scenes of toil and ambition.

The necessity of tending another's cares frequently serves to alleviate our own;

and I am often truly surprised at myself, how much less poignant my own feelings are becoming, in the prospect of so melancholy a reverse. Never could the blow have arrived at a better moment than this, when we are the inmates of a family whose words and whose example are admirably calculated to afford true consolation.

To say that I do not bitterly feel the blasting of my high-born hopes, the necessity of relinquishing the sweets of rank, influence, and luxury, would be an affectation of that independence and high-mindedness which I do not in reality possess. There is, however, no remedy, and we must even take up with the sober alienment of endurance. I can peculiarly feel for my father, for his habits are all of the world. Perhaps it may be possible for me to reconcile my feelings to the insipidity of retirement, and I may hope some time to lecture seriously on the delights of solitude ; not so one whose every pleasure has been drawn from the turmoil of office, and whose sweetest food has been the applause of men.

In my lonely walks, and I have had several long ones since my arrival here, my thoughts have been totally directed to the great change which we are already beginning to experience ; and I have endeavoured to anticipate my own feelings, and to discover how far it will ultimately affect my happiness. My prognostications, however, are hitherto gloomy. By way of tranquillising somewhat my father's feelings, and indeed to strengthen my own, I yesterday, as we rambled together by the side of the lake, took occasion to descant upon those advantages of retirement which have equally allured the proud, the gay, and the ambitious, and even drawn monarchs from their thrones. I instanced Bogoris, King of Bulgaria, and those Saxon princes* mentioned in the history of the venerable Bede ;—but here my father interrupting me, pronounced them to be barbarians, mere creatures of superstition. I continued, and cited the wise emperor Dioclesian, and the ambitious and politic Charles the 5th of Germany. “ These

* Sebbi-Coinred and Offa.

men," I said, "could be swayed by no other motives than a conviction of the vanity of all earthly pursuits. Charles, particularly, in the plenitude of power, with almost all Europe at his feet, deliberately deserted all his *grandeur*, relinquished his ambitious schemes, and retiring to the beautiful *monastery* of St. Justus, there sought that true dignity and peace of mind in heavenly contemplations, which all his power had failed to afford him."

"And do you really think that either happiness or dignity attended the declining days of that otherwise great man?" replied my father, with a sarcastic smile. "In my opinion, his sun set in a cloud; from being the lord of men, he became the slave of priests. Such examples do not benefit your argument. Believe me, the pleasures of seclusion are magnified, if not created, by distance."

I felt I had been unfortunate, but still persevered. I averred that in the emperor Dioclesian there was a case in point. He gave up his empire in the first instance with reluctance, yet so delightful did he

find the tranquillity and independence of his private condition, that when afterwards urged to resume his power, he steadily refused, without one sigh for the grandeur which he relinquished. Moreover, to bring the case nearer to ourselves, I proposed the dignified retirement of the Duc de Sully as a proof, that the high principles and feelings which governed our public life, might be equally well brought into play in private ; and therefore looking on the worst side of things, we were only partakers of the same fortunes with those illustrious men.

“ No ! ” replied my father, firmly, and with a deep sigh. “ Mine is no parallel case. In the magnificent retreat of Salona, Dioclesian was still the arbiter of kings ; and amid the refinements of Villebon, Sully was still the prop of the state. But to me nor power, nor influence, nor splendor, not even wealth is left ;—others will fill my place, and I shall be forgotten ! ”

I was silent ; for I had failed even to persuade myself. I do not think the gloomy grandeur of these mountains, nor

yet the sober regularity of our present habits, at all contribute to raise our spirits. It is folly, however, to repine ; and it is the part of philosophy to make even endurance pleasing. Nothing will more contribute to this than cultivating an interest in surrounding objects. I shall have, as you may conceive, abundance of leisure, and this must be employed, not in complaints and useless regrets, but in culling from remaining stores whatever will contribute to my enjoyment. All here is new and striking, and I shall occasionally commit to paper the result of my observations.

FROM THE SAME.

Rynan.

IF I had been told a few months ago that I was to be arbitrarily banished to this seclusion, and that my pleasures and my enjoyments were to be restricted to what it might chance to afford, my very soul would have revolted from the idea, and I should have immediately prepared my pen for lamentations and complaint, rivalling, if not in pathos, at least in sincerity, those of the exiled bard* on the savage shores of the Euxine. Happily, however, such is not the precise state of my present sentiments. The gall of bitter disappointment has ceased to supply my pen with invective, and I begin to look upon this new world around me as really containing matter of comfort, and as even holding forth, at no distant period, a fair prospect of increasing interest and happiness. I do not intend to insinuate that I have found the descriptions of our pastoral poets

* Ovid.

realized in country life ; nor is my imagination so heated, as to disguise its occasional dullness—its frequent discomforts and glaring barbarities, under idle fancies of eternal verdure and primæval simplicity. I do not border every mountain path with flowers unfading, nor do I find every gloomy wood and swampy brake the residence of divine and undisturbed contemplation, and a never-failing orchestra of nature's sweetest strains. The disadvantages of the country to one like myself, are even at this moment before me with their wonted force ; no fresh spell has captivated my unwilling fancy, and it is to other causes, which it shall be my business to detail at leisure, that I must attribute this favourable change in my sentiments.

I begin to discover that the condition of mankind is not, in fact, so dissimilar, and so disproportioned, as my pride and ignorance would have suggested ; and further, that nature has in many, if not in most instances, communicated to the soul a certain volatile, or rather, elastic principle,

which assists it in buffetting with the vicissitudes of life, and enables it to discover something which is tolerable, if not even pleasing, at every shifting of the scene.

The rich, the poor—the peasant, and the citizen—have all their share of the relative goods and evils of life ; and as there is no situation exempted from pain, so is there none devoid of comforts. Providence has portioned out his blessings with a more even hand than many are apt to imagine ; and where he has given the greatest susceptibility of pleasure, he has added the most acute and quickest sensations of pain *. The truth and justice of these reasonings become so apparent, that I begin to look around me with increasing complacency. Prejudice should ever yield to experience, and I have seen sufficient here to believe that I may still be happy.

* How beautifully has Burns versified the same idea in his lines on Sensibility :

Dearly bought the hidden treasure,
Finer feelings can bestow ;
Chords that vibrate sweetest pleasure,
Thrill the deepest notes of woe.

Yet as every reverse of feelings has its cause, I will be more particular in my detail of facts and observations : and first of all, I will favour you with a glimpse of our fire-side circle at Rynan.

There is nothing more difficult than to convey to one that is distant the exact similitude of those around you : at least, it requires perseverance in the writer, and a due proportion of interest in the reader ; for as man is an ever-varying and inconstant animal, to describe him correctly, you must necessarily present him to view in various situations and humours ; in fact, he must be dramatized. But as it is not my intention to attempt this at present with regard to my friends here, a feeble outline must be sufficient.

The Archdeacon, without being a common, is not at first a striking character. You enter his house, and you immediately feel yourself at home. There is no pomposity, no pride, no parade to alarm you ; and what is better still, there is no dissembled humility—no painful and unreasonable assiduities—no upsetting of the tranquillity

of your guest by the unnecessary sacrifice of your own. All is calm, regular, orderly; and you are permitted the satisfaction of feeling that your presence is no interruption, and that you are at perfect liberty to please yourself. Not that any single necessary attention is omitted, but then it is conceded unobtrusively, and as a matter of course; and before you have been half a day at Rynan, you feel perfectly naturalized, and as one of the family.

In his countenance, our host displays all that cheerfulness—all that urbanity and perfect contentedness—that so conspicuously dwell in his heart. His eyes have an expression peculiarly mild, affectionate, and benevolent; and the silvery locks which are combed back from his open forehead, add to his venerable and interesting appearance. Together with these winning qualities of the exterior, he possesses a dignity of manner which never fails to command respect; and in his conversation, though carried on in a style the most simple and unaffected, there is a clearness and a candour, and at the same

time a decision, arising from much thought and experience, which give a great and deserved weight to his sentiments. But it is not from a single glance, such as I am now enabled to give, that any perfect idea can be formed of a character at once so exalted and so rare as that of the Arch-deacon Hastings. He must be observed in various lights to be sufficiently appreciated, and I may perhaps have future occasions so to present him.

It was the remark of some great painter, that by never suffering the eye to dwell upon any but the best specimens of art, the taste became almost necessarily refined and chaste. May not an analogy be instituted in morals? I think it may; and therefore in making the superior qualities of this excellent churchman a subject of frequent meditation and remark, I may reasonably hope to raise my own character to a higher and more perfect standard. I do not think there is one mere human help to the attainment of virtue more efficacious than this. We know, that by the accidental contemplation of celebrated charac-

ters, such emulation has been excited in souls otherwise inert, that they have at length outshone even their very models ; and if this applies to literature and science, surely in an equal, if not in a greater degree, may it apply to those still sublimer qualities of the soul, which in their exertion have a regard to a more lasting and a higher state of existence.

Man is altogether a social being ; and consequently, to use the argument of a great modern philosopher*, strongly governed by the passions of sympathy, imitation, and ambition. It is well that these should be employed and exercised to the best of ends. If the example of Philip of Macedon made an even more insatiable conqueror of his son—of Herodotus an even more perfect historian of Thucydides—of Isocrates a more profound philosopher of Aristotle—surely, in the contemplation of religious excellence, a like stimulus cannot be wanting ; and if so (as we have abundant instances to prove), the study of the wise and good ranks

* Burke.

among the noblest and the most valuable of human pursuits. Truly, virtue hath many heaven-born attributes, but not one more excellent than the power it possesses of extending its influence, and of shedding a mild and alluring light over every scene which it approaches. The most insensible have owned its power ; the most guilty feel it ; and it is not the least reward of a virtuous mind, that while it gains the respect of many, it ensures the imitation of some.

But while pretending to draw a picture of manners, I must not be seduced into a moral disquisition. The portraiture of such a character as the archdeacon's needs no apology ; if correctly delineated, it cannot fail of affording both amusement and profit.

Our hostess at Rynan, though a good and an amiable woman, is not, we may hope, a rare character among her sex. Her virtues are entirely of the domestic kind, and all her pride is centered in her home and the beloved objects which it contains. She has been beautiful in her

youth, and her age, unimpaired by the unnatural pursuits of gay life, still retains very visible traces of former attractions. These too are heightened by the unvarying neatness of her costume, and the sweet-ness of a smile which conscious happiness causes frequently to play upon a countenance, otherwise somewhat grave and sedate. Mrs. Hastings is a useful, without being a *notable* character ; she is a gentlewoman without being fashionable ; she is a disciplinarian in her family, without being either needlessly precise, or absurdly particular. Her ideas of comfort and domestic propriety, just hit the proper mean, and unlike some of our good English dames, she particularly avoids in her arrangements that imprudent eagerness to excel, which too often torments and disarranges a whole house, and in no degree promotes the happiness or increases the satisfaction of the family or its friends.

It is delightful to witness the perfect harmony which exists between this excellent couple. They married young, and

years have so moulded their dispositions and tastes to each other, that they seem to have but one heart and one voice. The real sweets of conjugal affection, I never before so forcibly witnessed, and the foundation upon which it rests is the only sure and rational one—it is passion softened down into mutual dependence and the warmest esteem. Respect mingling itself with affection and confidence, ought ever to regulate the manner of the female to her husband, while tenderness and gratitude, and a manly indifference to trivial points, should distinguish the bearing of the man towards the weaker partner of his fortunes. This delightful picture is exhibited at Rynan, and often as I contemplate these two estimable beings journeying through life hand in hand, and assisting, consoling, and encouraging each other by the way ; she full of “kindness*, meekness, and comfort,” that beautiful sentence of the wise man recurs to my memory, and I regard our host “as not like other men.”

* Vide Eccl. xxxvi. 23.

From the heads of the establishment, I return to the minor branches, and here is manifested the finger of an impartial Providence, whose policy it is so to distribute his benefits, that few should be entirely blest. The family consists of three daughters and two sons: of the former, one resides with a relation, and of the latter, one is in the navy and abroad; the others live at home. The archdeacon is a man of learning and taste, and we may naturally suppose, that nothing could be a greater gratification to him, or a pleasanter resource in his retirement, than the possession of children to whom he might communicate a portion of his own acquirements. Strange, however, as it is, this boon is denied to his wishes. His sons, as I am informed, like to him in feature, are strangely dissimilar in mind, and neither of them are destined for that profession which their father so eminently adorns. The younger, who remains at home, is particularly handsome, mild, and placid in his demeanour, but somewhat heavy in intellect. The only obstinacy

he ever betrayed was in an unconquerable aversion to books, and beyond the mere necessary acquirements of a little reading and writing, he never could be induced to apply. His occupations and his pleasures are all agricultural, and when he does join in conversation, which seldom happens, it is only when his favourite subjects are touched upon.

“ How can he get wisdom,” saith an eloquent apocryphal writer, “ that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the goad, and driveth oxen, and is occupied in their labours, and whose talk is of bullocks?” And the truth of this is exemplified in Robert Hastings. With every opportunity of acquiring mental excellence, he wastes his days in the listless pursuit of employments, which however much they may benefit the body, leave the mind a wild and uncultured waste. Yet correction and enticement were equally unavailing to rouse his dormant energies, and the anxious parents make themselves happy in the consciousness, that if not useful according to

his station, he is at least harmless to his fellow-creatures, and comfortable to himself.

The elder brother is, I am informed, a great contrast to the one just described. He manifested from his earliest years a spirit, bold, restless, and aspiring ; he has a mind quick to apprehend, but unwilling to apply ; ever eager for action, he is impetuous and resolute, and peculiarly fitted for the profession, which, against the warmest remonstrances of his parents, he chose for himself. To such a youth, the seclusion of Rynan, and its quiet and sober habits, soon became irksome, and it was a relief to all parties, when an uncle took him under his immediate patronage, and fitted him out for distant service.

The sisters partake of none of these peculiarities. They are somewhat older than their brothers, and appear to possess the mild and amiable qualities of their parents. Mary, the youngest, who resides with her aunt, at an old family place further up in the mountains, has the superiority in beauty and perhaps in

manner, for being of quick parts, and possessed of some reading and observation, she is well calculated for general society. There is moreover an occasional deference manifested towards her opinions, which argues some natural or acquired superiority.

Such is a faint outline of this most interesting family: interesting, not perhaps so much as I have represented them, but as I *know* them, for there is not a day which I spend in this favoured mansion, which does not discover some new excellence, and raise my ideas of the moral capabilities of our nature.

Ladyston.*

IT is now the fifth day since I left Rynan, to superintend the alterations at this our intended residence. It is a very solitary spot—solitary, even compared with the other parts of this retired district. The road to it is through a tremendous rocky defile, and the chasm being in a great measure occupied by the deep bed of the river which carries off the superfluous waters of the neighbouring lakes, barely affords room beneath the impending cliffs for the vehicle of the awe-struck passenger. Emerging from this mountain pass, you skirt the borders of a narrow estuary, and here the heights receding, and relaxing somewhat of their savage character, make room for a pleasing succession of fertile meadows and well cultivated corn lands, which are however soon terminated by the intervention of a

* All the letters and papers dated Ladyston, are from the pen of Mr. B. Tempest.

high and naked ridge, beyond which are visible the distant waves of the ocean.

This estate my mother claims as at once her birth-place and her portion ; and as it is almost all we have now left, we must endeavour to be as proud of it as she is, and as we are told, her ancestors were. Proud of Ladyston ! Alas ! what a contrast to the gay and animated scenes we have left ! How much are we the slaves of circumstances ! Else why is it, that the very spot, the possession of which has been the highest stretch of ambition to some, in the estimation of others presents little else than a prospect dreary and unpleasing ?

This is the fifth day only of my abode here, yet how heavily—how very dully has it passed away ! How perverse are the affections of the mind ! My soul does not, I find, possess all that elasticity with which I have lately gifted it. The novelty of my new situation is gone, and with it no small portion of my patience and endurance. Extremes are never long pleasing. Wearied with noise and pomp,

and gaiety, I at first did not acutely feel the loss of my accustomed pursuits; but now, repletion has yielded to abstinence, and my former appetite returns.

The epithet “inveterate,” is not ill-applied to habit. The tyrant Dionysius, when driven from Syracuse, was so incapable of existing without authority, that he established a school at Corinth. I can sympathize with him, and would fain imitate his example, by forming here, were it possible, a little court for my amusement. Hitherto I have lived wholly with and for others; can it then be surprising, that my soul revolts somewhat, now it is compelled to live wholly with and for itself? The immediate and total abandonment of old and long-cherished habits, is as dangerous to the mind as similar extremes are to the body. The peripatetic doctrine of “a mean,” experience proves to be most excellent. The man of gaiety and fashion, suddenly transplanted into retirement, has a mind like an empty vessel, ready to be filled by what first offers, however disagreeable it may be.

Unfortified by previous habit—unprepared with intellectual stores, and incapable of raising up immediate objects of interest—broodings, disappointment, cares, and melancholy anticipations, find an easy entrance, and riot in the misery of their victim.

“ Yet a wise man,” says my favourite philosopher, “ ought to hold all earthly things in perfect contempt. Disappointments, reverses, labours—even pain and death itself, he looks upon with indifference.” Reason teaches him that every perturbation is a disease of the mind, for which nature has provided remedies as well as for the body. The wise man, therefore, employing these, rises superior to all the affections of the soul, and entirely casts off all subjection to his passions.

I never, certainly, met with such a man. Cicero himself was far from realizing in his own person the splendid picture he has drawn. Nevertheless, philosophy may do much towards the attainment of tranquillity. When we consider the

short space allowed us to live in the world, does not reason strongly upbraid us for wasting even the smallest portion of it in unavailing regrets?

The pursuit of this train of thought is one of those powerful remedies which reason supplies to the distempered imagination. As I read the beautiful disquisitions of the eloquent Roman upon this subject, my mind, as I turn over each page, gathers new strength. Even now, as I recollect his sublime sentiments, the folly of repining becomes more apparent. Philosophy certainly tends to exalt the human character. Little does man know the powers of self-resistance which he possesses. He is too apt to suffer himself to be enervated by the delicacy of his own imagination. By inactivity and complaint, he adds fuel to the flame that consumes him. The smallest trifles become magnified into the greatest evils, and with the power of rising superior to many of the affections of his nature, he suffers reason to become their slave. “Let us despise these follies,” says the

philosopher. “ Let us lay the foundation of *our* happiness in the strength and greatness of our minds, and a contempt and disregard for all earthly things, and in the practice of every virtue.” Thus a heathen speaks, and does Christianity dissent? It adds weight to these reasonings—it confirms the instability of every thing earthly—it forbids the soul to be subject to the world—it preaches the doctrine of contentment in every condition, and it reveals an additional motive which ancient philosophy wanted—the *certainty* of a life to come.

Then man is in a great measure the arbiter of his own happiness? Certainly. Half our miseries are self-inflicted, and the rest reason might mitigate, if not remove. Reason is that helm, of which few avail themselves sufficiently during their voyage through life. They allow every gust to agitate their course, every wave to shake them, and, tempest-driven, they are often altogether lost.

As I write these things, I feel their invigorating effect. Rouse thyself, O my

soul! Why these unworthy repinings? Let not the Christian be surpassed in fortitude by the Heathen. This lethargy of the reason is disgraceful: put thine own shoulder to the wheel, and if further help is needed, trust it will be granted thee! How absurd, yet how common, it is to recal and indulge those very repinings and sensations, which, having formerly given us pain, ought to be sedulously banished from our minds, with the occasions that gave them birth. There are sufficient generally of present afflictions to occupy us, without raking up those of the past, to add to the store. Yet there *are* epicures in misery; and I, perhaps, owe to the reperusal of my diary many of the sensations which have just disturbed me. Yet my reflections on leaving the scenes of my gayest hours were not unnatural, and there are moods in which the perusal of such things is most congenial.

Nevertheless, to indulge in such dark retrospects is folly. Why should we reopen wounds that time promises to close? A wise man will not deign to waste one

thought on what is inevitable. Idleness is the parent of folly, and nothing is more dangerous; nothing more to be avoided than the inactivity of the soul. Unemployed, it is sure to rebel. To the eye of the wise, there is pleasure and profit in every scene upon which it dwells; prejudice only binds our affections and our happiness to one spot. Independence of soul is the noblest attribute of man, and unnumbered blessings follow in its train. I must put off this childishness—I must curb this infantine propensity to the indulgence of vain regrets; I must seek out fresh food for my mind—I must range well the field in which fate has placed me, and success is sure to crown my efforts. It is glorious to prove the power of reason—it is noble to exercise it—it is delightful to conquer! Virtue will smile upon my efforts—religion will support them, and, if removed from former associations, I can create fresh ones here; they will be more valuable, inasmuch as they are the fruits of my own endeavours!

Rynan.

AGAIN an inmate of Rynan, I am comparatively happy. Not thrown entirely upon my own resources, my mind can act with more vigour. The little agreeable breaks which the society here affords, prevent the intellect from being overburthened with its own exertions. I find that I am progressively advancing towards that independence of soul which the philosophers of old never ceased to eulogize, and which to one in my situation is positively necessary to the enjoyment of even common comfort. By and by I shall be a fit inhabitant of these regions; and though never likely to rival the celebrated Paul of Egypt in my ascetic inclinations, yet I hope in time to be able to live more for myself than I have hitherto done, and be less dependant upon the world and ambition, for my pleasures and my hopes.

That I should have occasional returns of dullness and impatience, is but too hu-

man not to be venial; but these, thanks to the exhortations and example of our host, aiding the efforts of my own reason, begin to be less frequent and more easily overcome. My interest in my new pursuits too, increases with the progression of time.

Under our peculiar circumstances the society, but more than all, the exhortations of the Archdeacon, can scarcely fail of having a salutary effect. If my father and myself came hither mere worldlings, it is impossible we should remain so, if there is extant one spark of religious feeling in our hearts. The preaching, the pursuits, the manner, the conversation of our host, all tend insensibly, but most forcibly, to throw the world at a distance. The events, the pains and pleasures, the hopes and fears of this life, are never made of such primary importance as to absorb the whole soul. This in all its features is considered as a changeable scene, and that *there is one which changes not*, is ever had in remembrance.

The Archdeacon is a most impressive

preacher. What a glow of feeling does he communicate to his attentive hearers ! How important do the great doctrines of Christianity sound in his mouth ! What new sentiments have not his reasonings created in my breast ! At court it was our custom to pursue the fashionable phantom of the day, and rather to look for what was striking in manner, and novel in style, than what was merely good and useful in itself. Solemnity without matter—zeal without knowledge—elegance without heart—doctrine without morality, and morality without doctrine,—these are too frequently the sole recommendations of those public orators, whom the multitude, directed by false taste and blinder fashion, crowd to hear and to see.

But of this class is not the Archdeacon Hastings. He preaches not to the mere outward senses—he seeks not the praise and admiration of men ; but, conscious of the importance and awfulness of his object, he considers himself as the mere vehicle of Christian truth, and thus, ab-

sorbed in his matter, and not in himself, he cannot fail to reach the heart.

Most certainly, *simplicity* should be the leading attribute of the preacher of the gospel. What he delivers, he should deliver clearly, and soberly, and reverently. Rant and lukewarmness are equally insulting to God. The preacher when he addresses his flock should remember that God is present, and that he himself is the mere instrument to convey his will to his creatures. How awful is this consideration, and how well might it be pressed home upon some! One might imagine, that when certain of our divines mount the rostrum, that they were a superior order of beings, and that their sole aim was to display their own perfections, and wanton in their fancied elevation. Their discourses are high-flown, positive, declamatory, and they peculiarly affect the studied graces of modulation and action. They seek for the applause of men, and for a time they gain it; they convert the house of God into a theatre, and are rewarded with the admiration of the spectators. In the

midst of all this buffoonery, surely they must forget that God himself is present, nor do they regard the admonition of the son of Sirach, that as “the power of the Lord is great,” so “he is honoured of the lowly.”

How often do we see, and surely it must be with pain, some young pretender to popularity, shouting his crude notions into the ears of his elders, outraging all the rules of decorum, and taking advantage of that superiority in the congregation which fortune rather than merit hath given him, to send forth his anathemas, and mouth his indigested precepts in a style of authoritative boldness, which would scarcely have become a Peter or a Paul*. Whenever I have witnessed this, though not perhaps in the days of my

* To preach to show the extent of our reading, or the subtleness of our wit—to parade it in the eyes of the vulgar with the beggarly accounts of a little learning, tinselled over with a few words which glitter, but convey less light and less warmth—is a dishonest use of the poor single half hour in a week which is put into our hands; 'tis not preaching the gospel, but ourselves. “For my own part,” continued Yorick, “I had rather direct five words point blank to the heart.”

- prosperity the most rigid of Christians, my chagrin has been sincere, and I have cordially wished, with I believe thousands of my brethren, that the sacred word of God should not be entrusted to inexperienced or ignorant persons, but that in those who are privileged to ascend the pulpit, there should be apparent the solidity of real knowledge, and the calmness and discretion of age.

In the primitive church preaching was considered of such sacred importance, and its requisite attainments were estimated so highly, that it was made the almost peculiar and privileged office and exercise of the bishops and most venerable presbyters of the church. Young men, and even the grey-headed, if unqualified, were never permitted to take the lead in public assemblies, a rule, the necessity of which, common sense and common decency equally point out. Till the passions are cooled by age, the opinions settled and established by study, the character formed into sedateness, composure, and habits of sober reflection, no man, whatever may be

his talents, whatever his personal attractions or accomplishments, ought to be permitted to teach ; and it is a notorious fact, that many who are exalted to the priestly office, must, from the nature of their education, and the attention necessarily devoted to more secular objects, have little acquaintance with their Bible, and hence, alas ! arise that presumption, that bad taste, that unchristian-like rant, or that shocking indifference, which are so painful to the modest followers of the doctrine of Christ.

In what I have urged, I would not be understood to insinuate that bad preaching is general among the clergy of our establishment. Far be it from me to assert any such thing. I have listened to many with a delight and a pride beyond expression ; a delight to hear the joyful tidings of salvation properly and reverently proclaimed, and a pride to find the superstructure of our church resting upon such strong and polished pillars. Yet instances of bad taste and carelessness among our preachers are too frequent.

Many will not remember the *responsibility* which attaches to their office. They spend too much of their time in the pursuit of unimportant objects, and instead of labouring incessantly to feed their flocks with food well prepared and palatable, they throw to them mere husks and parings, the hasty productions of a few snatches and intervals from mere wordly occupations. Yet even this offends me not so much as affectation in the pulpit, and a thirst for the applause of men.

What St. Paul says to the Thessalonians on the subject of his public ministry, presents a delightful model for imitation. “ Our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile; but as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so we speak; *not as pleasing men, but God*, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness: nor of *men sought we glory*, neither of you nor yet of others, when we might have been burthensome as the Apostles of

Christ. But we were *gentle* among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children. As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, *as a father doth his children*, that ye would walk worthy of God who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? *For ye are our glory and joy.*"

The practice of the Apostle seems admirably consonant with the precepts of his Master; and if these and like passages were duly impressed upon the minds of those who take upon themselves the awful responsibilities of the ministry, we should find our church more truly Christian-like in its members, and more successful and popular in its efforts. *Zeal*, which hath its origin in the heart, and is not exercised in vociferations and intemperance of manner—*moderation*, as considering that God himself is present in our assemblies—*earnestness*, as feeling the importance of the charge entrusted

to him—*knowledge*, as befitting the instructor of others—these should be the leading qualities of the Christian preacher. To these we may add affection towards his flock—piety and forgiveness for their errors, and a hearty and unceasing desire to win them to the right and good way. Next to these come the graces of elocution and beauty of style, things excellent in themselves, and desirable; but by no means to be made primary objects of regard, for they tend to vanity, and are the frequent cause of men preaching themselves and not the gospel.

In the Archdeacon exist these qualities in perfection. It is impossible to mark the mildness and gentleness of his exterior without at once feeling the heart to expand towards him—to hear him speak, such general good-will and benevolence, mark every expression, that it is impossible not to love him—but to hear him preach, his earnestness being so excellently tempered by gentleness and affection—the soul is at once soothed, gratified

and enlightened, and confesses that the word of God is indeed sweet, and the religion of Christ inviting and irresistible, when it is recommended by such a teacher. And truly the attention and the piety of the major part of his audience bear witness to the effects of his eloquence. He came into these neglected vallies a messenger of peace, and having “turned many to righteousness,” he may hope finally himself “to shine as the stars for ever and ever.”

There are many in our church who are capable of the same excellence, and none who could not by perseverance make some progress towards it, and that it is their duty so to do, the wonderful effects which it produces in the general aspect of society must abundantly prove. I would go to my parish church as the Jews did of old to their temple, with joy, and confidence and pride—not that unholy pride which David prays against under the name of presumption—but with a reliance upon the high privileges of the gospel, an inward satisfaction in feeling the

capabilities of the pastor for his spiritual office, and an exultation in the thought that being poor and fallen creatures, yet still the God that we adore, condescends to be amongst us.

How strangely doth adversity soften the heart! with what interest does the mind dwell upon subjects now, which but a short time ago were viewed at least with indifference! In this retreat, reflection asserts her rights. When amid the bustle of worldly pleasures and pursuits,— objects thronged and passed away so quickly as to afford little opportunity for observation or regard. The soul fed upon expectation, not upon retrospect, and there was nothing so interesting, nothing so important which the future did not promise to surpass. But now I have leisure to collect my scattered stores of thought. Like the cattle of the plain, I ruminate upon former satiety—I can separate what is excellent from what is not so, and by a judicious employment of my reason, I may hope at length to be in possession of that inesti-

mable help to happiness—a right estimate of things.

One thing I am sure of—I have great reason to be thankful to providence for placing me within the reach of virtuous influence, and providing me with so holy and so excellent a teacher. Had I in the first burst of my disappointment and chagrin been thrown amongst unthinking and careless associates, or had my mind been left entirely the victim of its own impressions, the present scene and the future prospect, would doubtless have been far, very far different to what they now are. Religious duties, looked upon rather as a necessary evil than as a substantial blessing, would have lost even the faint respect which early impressions induced me to pay to them, and unfortified by pious dependence upon God—that principle so conspicuous in the words and actions of my pious friend—my soul might have yielded herself the slave of passion, and misery have occupied her inmost seat.

With a mind fraught with inward

repinings, and looking in vain to mere philosophy for relief, I came here ;—but how gradually have nobler sentiments been awakened within my breast! May time mature them and increase their influence, till at length the day may come when I may feel, really feel, that my present state is far happier than that which I have been compelled to relinquish, and that not my lips only, but my heart may acknowledge, that there is mercy in every dispensation.

Rynan.

THE time was, that perplexed with the mysteries of our national faith, and judging of them from a mere cursory glance, and not from a keen and rigid examination, I looked upon religion rather in a view generally moral and political, than as really of vital import to myself. While all went forward smoothly, and occasion never tried their real strength, I had a sublime idea of the unassisted energies of our nature. Fond of ancient literature, and early taught to respect ancient philosophy, I gloried in the vivid pictures there drawn of human perfectibility, and a Plato, a Pythagoras, a Zenocrates, and other exalters of the innate perfections of the soul were at once my dependence, and were stored up as exemplars for future imitation.

Though not unconscious of many of my own failings, yet I contemned the degrading idea, that man is “not sufficient of himself to do any thing as of

himself ;" but I was thoroughly convinced, that reason had the power when properly exerted, of not only keeping the passions in subjection, but even of setting at defiance the most inveterate buffetings of fortune. Not, perhaps, that I went so far as to assert with Epicurus, that a man in torture may cry out with sincerity, " how pleasant this is !" nor with Cicero, " that happiness may descend into Phalaris's bull ;" nevertheless, I was inwardly persuaded, that upon its own unaided powers the soul must rest in all the extremities of fortune, and that in all ordinary, and even in many extraordinary exigencies, no stimulus beyond the plain suggestions of our own reason was required to promote and ensure our happiness.

Moreover, I was persuaded with regard to the passions, that where the soul was enlightened by philosophy she had sufficient energy within herself to bring every emotion under systematic control, so that joys and sorrows,

prosperity and adversity, pains and pleasures—in fine, all things which violently affected common minds, might be brought into such subjection to our natural reason, as to fail of their general overwhelming and undignified effects, and that a scale of rationality might be instituted to which every affection of the mind could be made strictly subservient.

Such was my creed while rioting in the lap of luxury—a succession of pleasures all my care, and occasional satiety my only grievance. And well indeed was it for the more virtuous of the heathens of former ages, that they had even this frail system to cling to, amid the general dissoluteness of the times. That spark of virtue which providence allowed man to retain after his fall from perfection, could not be so overwhelmed, even by the empire of vice, superstition, and profaneness, as not to rouse itself into some action; and hence were erected those frail, but splendid systems, which

influencing the practice of a few, and the admiration of all, thoroughly satisfied none.

So plausible are the reasonings of mere philosophers to the young and inexperienced mind, that feeling a great delight in those pictures of moral perfectibility which they draw, and by which they would dignify our frail nature, we are too apt to forget the necessity of enquiring how far these lofty principles were supported by their effects, and we forget to notice that gloomy vein of doubt, which more or less pervades the discourses or meditations of the more sensible writers of antiquity. Thus Cicero,—that redoubted champion of the dignity of our nature—mournfully insinuates, after he has written several books on that subject, that, sometimes when he considers the course of his own life—the many sorrows and troubles with which his soul has been exercised, he is tempted to reject the idea of man's capability of determining his own happiness, and to

suspect the weakness and frailness of human nature*.

But it is not these wavering of the wise heathens themselves—it is not the variety nor the contrariety of their systems—it is not even their want of self-consistency, which have force sufficient to convince their rash and eager votaries of their fallacy and blindness. *Experience* is the only test by which man comes to a knowledge of the weakness of his nature—experience must ever lower his pride, and well is it, if it does not damp his energies. When put to the proof, man feels the in-

* This sentiment we find finely enlarged upon in the “Paradise Regained” of Milton, where our Saviour so nobly and so eloquently refutes the subtle reasonings of his adversary. After stating the principal tenets of the ancient philosophers, and exposing their contradictions, the Son of God adds :

Alas ! what can they teach, and not mislead ?
Ignorant of themselves, of God much more—
Much of the soul they talk, but all awry,
And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none, &c.

Who therefore seeks in these
True wisdom, finds her not ; or by delusion,
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets
An empty cloud.—Book 4th.

sufficiency of his own efforts to support him in that proud seat on which fancy has enthroned him, and he is compelled to own reluctantly enough, that there is something wanting, not merely to stimulate, but actually to aid his own endeavours, before he can lay claim to that moral excellence, or ever approach that independent state, which philosophy may assist his imagination to picture, but which its utmost efforts will not enable him to attain.

In myself is this doctrine most amply verified. Vainly did I fly to philosophy for consolation under my disappointment and chagrin—but it neither effectually soothed the present, nor did it gild the future—it delighted my reason, but it could not influence my passions,—it pointed to an arduous and a dignified path, but imparted no strength to pursue it, till my soul, languishing in the unequal contest, at length gladly listened to those reasonings, and submitted herself to those revelations, which providence so merci-

fully and so opportunely offered to her acceptance.

The traveller who for years has been revelling upon the gaieties and luxuries of various climes till he is wearied and eloyed, does not return to the simplicity of his home enjoyments with a greater zest than I feel, in renewing those just impressions of our religious dependence, which were carefully instilled into my infant mind by an excellent teacher.— Time, the fashion of the world—ambition, and a thousand vain pursuits, deadened, but happily could not destroy them, and seeing in my amiable friend and host, an example of that exalted state which I was once taught to revere, my former feelings are revived, and I am delighted in being permitted from his own lips to learn how to imitate his own excellence. A brighter—a more substantial future is opened to my view ;—the mere present ceases to be all important—my ideas have procured a wider range, and I feel daily more and more the neces-

sity of attributing every event, ordinary, as well as extraordinary, to the operation of some great and infinitely wise system which it hath not been permitted us to scan.

Truly there is in our religion all that the philosophers of old sighed for. Great as were the efforts of their unassisted reason—meritorious as were their endeavours to establish virtue, as the principle of happiness,—yet with what pity may not the christian peruse their intellectual history—what additional force do not their wavering and inconsistencies—their lofty aspirings, their many failings—their public boasts, and their private misgivings, afford to the truths of that sublime system, which he has embraced. How happy must he be in the conviction, that while the tenets of mere philosophy are often contradicted by experience, and the more they are examined, the more they betray their own insufficiency—our faith is in perfect unison with the constitution of our human nature, and like an inexhaustible mine,

rewards encreased efforts with encreasing treasures, producing no alloy of disappointment, and yielding no incitement to despondency.

Not that I would disparage philosophy. Alas! the best christians have but too frequent occasion to recal its precepts to mind, and there are many things to be found in the books of ancient sages not unworthy of a christian's pen. All I would assert is, its proved insufficiency to confer happiness by subjugating the soul. Allied with revealed truth, philosophy is all powerful and necessary to the production of really exalted character—alone, it is feeble, temporary in its effects, and uncertain in its operation. Religion presents us with a philosophy ennobled by principles, and enforced by duties, higher than any the mere heathen could produce; and could Socrates and Cicero appear amongst us duly instructed in divine truth, we should hear them both confess, that they had at length discovered that real satisfaction, for which they had sought in vain, and had obtained

those solid principles upon which alone a system could be erected to last for ever. Well, and truly might the eloquent Roman then repeat his exclamation, seeing the wonderful effect of this combined philosophy upon his fellow creatures.—“ O vitæ philosophia dux—O virtutis indagatrix—expultrix—que vitiorum ! Quid non modo nos, sed omnino vita hominum sine te esse potuisset * !”

How is it possible, that things so necessary to be known,—knowledge so inestimable, should so frequently escape the wise, while they flourish in the breasts of the poor and ignorant ? *Pride*, that favourite and most formidable engine of the evil one, blinds the eyes of many, while worldly mindedness, an infatuation to be wondered at, considering the brevity of life, deters even more from resigning themselves to that guide which alone can shield from present evil by opening prospects of future good. Ad-

* Tusc. Quæst. lib. iv.

versity is frequently the kindest friend to man, by opening his eyes to his real interests, and there is a very solemn and important truth contained in those words of Scripture, "that whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth."

Rynan.

“THE study of man,” says Rochefoucault, “is infinitely more necessary than the study of books.” Many will add that it is more amusing. I know not, however, whether I should agree in the extension of the sentiment. In books, as on the stage, we find things stripped of much uninteresting and often disgusting detail. Those who only know mankind, and know them thoroughly, through the medium of actual experience, must have dearly earned their knowledge, though no one will doubt its being the most genuine; and therefore the most to be depended upon.

Some there are who go to the strangest lengths in endeavouring to acquire a thorough insight into the peculiarities of their own species. They mix with the profligate and the unprincipled—they associate themselves with the idle and eccentric, and call this the study of mankind. I should think that the character of man

might be equally well traced through the medium of his virtues, and that the many failures of the best and the wisest would afford instances sufficient of the fallibility and innate weakness of our nature. Speculating on this side of the question, we at least preserve ourselves from many disgusting exhibitions, and from that taint* which association with vice too often communicates, for says the poet,

“Ev'n Virtue
Will sometimes bear away her outward robes,
Soil'd in the wrestle with iniquity.”

The study of the world is certainly full of interest and amusement to the man of cool judgment and strong nerve. Perpetual variety offers itself to his attention, and in every one whom he meets a fresh portrait is presented to his inspection. Allowing no sympathies to blind his judgment—no excitements to rouse his

* Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, *familiar* with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

Essay on Man, ep. 2d.

feelings, he stands aloof as it were in every company, and superior himself to the generality of his fellow-men, he coolly reads the motives, while he watches the actions and the words of those around him. There is much of this abstracted and observant quality required in the composition of a great man, and he who would read the world and he who would rule it, should be equally adepts in this art.

I know not what tempted me to commence this train of desultory reasoning, unless it is the visit I have just paid at Brynn-Allyn. "The governor," for so Sir Thomas Allyn is generally designated here, from some temporary post he held during the confusions of the late war, being formerly acquainted with my father, called upon us immediately upon our arrival in the country. We have just spent a few days at his mansion; and our fire-side party, besides our host, his lady, and ourselves, consisted of a Mr. Martlet, the Rector of a neighbouring parish, and Miss Mary Hastings, the

youngest daughter of the Archdeacon, and an almost confirmed resident in the family.

To pourtray in proper colours the many personal and mental peculiarities of the Governor is out of my power from our short acquaintance; but I cannot forbear venturing a slight sketch. He at first reminded me greatly of the portraits of some of those stern and stiff republicans of Charles's days, who still figure in many of our private picture galleries. His countenance, however, is quite of the martial cast. It is hard, quick, commanding. The compression of his lip, and the flash of his eye, speak of battles past, and of dangers foreseen and surmounted; while his bronzed forehead and iron cheeks tell of distant climes—of storms by sea and land, and many days of laborious service, from the poles to the equator. Though not more than sixty, yet considering the many vicissitudes he has undergone, he may be pronounced wonderful for his age. His step is yet quick and firm, and his manner is peremptory

and decisive. The rapidity of his speech—the impatience of his movements—and the continual working of his features from one expression to another, convey to a stranger a more unfavourable idea of his temper than I understand the reality warrants, for he is by no means one of those worthies who would have all the world to understand, “When I ope my lips, let no dog bark.” The long habit of command, and the frequent necessity in his naval duties of abruptness and decision, have communicated a rapidity and sharpness to his manner and his speech, which he is now too old to correct; and, as far as he is concerned, every thing is conducted at Brynn-Allyn much in the same mode as it was when he commanded the flag ship Bellona in the Bay of Honduras.

The governor’s costume, too, is somewhat singular. His long waisted blue coat, of respectable dimensions, is lined with white, and buttoned up to the chin. He wears (and they are always admirably polished) a pair of boots which reach up

to his knees, and into these are stuffed his trowsers, with a carelessness not devoid of conceit. His shirt-collar is turned back over a black stock, and his buff waistcoat is slightly edged with embroidery. His hair, which is neither black nor yet grey, but a mixture of both, and naturally straight and thin, is not allowed to have any rest, but starts up in woful disorder, describing with much accuracy every point in the compass. Altogether, he could never be mistaken for any thing but the gentleman, though in his costume are exhibited the extremes of neatness and disorder.

Lady Allyn is the sister of Mrs. Hastings, but the relationship is not to be traced in the resemblance. She was educated in a large town by her mother's relations, while Mrs. Hastings was reared in the valley which had given her birth. Lady Allyn is crippled, and though when young accounted as much of a beauty as a fair skin, red cheeks, and blue eyes could make her, yet now she is so fed up by inactivity and indulgence, that her appearance is the

very reverse of prepossessing. No one can be in her company a day, without being able to form a shrewd guess of the depth of her understanding, notwithstanding her lofty pretensions ; nor can the thin veil of politeness which is on occasions spread over her natural manner, deceive the most inexperienced as to the real nature of her disposition.

Yet in saying this perhaps I am going too far. Opinions of people hastily formed, are certainly seldom altogether correct. Bad taste in speaking and in acting will often give the appearance of a worse temper, and a more disagreeable disposition, than a person really possesses. Time and close observation only can enable us rightly to appreciate character. In some, all the unpleasing qualities appear uppermost, and are infused into their general manner ; and their good ones, meanwhile, have few opportunities of displaying themselves. In others, that showy and well-armed exterior, which at first fascinates and delights, not unfrequently conceals a mean and grovelling spirit,

which the hour of trial only can bring to light.

The Brynn, however, is one of those places where visitors have much to put up with. Both the host and hostess are strange, rough, and wayward in their manners; and contrive, in various ways, to tease their guests, and put the extremest verge of their politeness to the test. The governor, ever rigidly observant of all outward forms of respect to the rest of the fair sex, seems to have a perfect contempt for his lady, which she in her turn does not attempt to diminish, but rather inflames by continual querulousness and opposition. Though they have been married many years, yet they are not yet reconciled to each other's prejudices and peculiarities; and during the time of my visit there, I sat in continual apprehension of an open rupture. Woe take the guests where the heads of a house draw different ways! Whenever this is the case, there is always a want of proper and equal attention: continual and most painful appeals are made to those who would

be quiet and well disposed ; pleasure hides her face, and the gall of bitterness is mingled with every cup.

Whimsicalities are sometimes excusable in females, from reasons which few of them would like to admit :—nay, even in the governor's case there are allowances to be made, from the nature of his education and employments, which have always been of the blunt and rugged kind. But I consider eccentricity, generally, as indicative of conceit and ignorance, weakness and folly. Those must have a good opinion of their own importance, who venture to set at defiance the forms and social regulations of the world ; and I have been frequently astonished how much absolute rudeness and brutality is endured in society, under this equivocal and most absurd of denominations.

Eccentricity is a tax upon the better sense and better feeling of mankind, which ought but very rarely to be endured ; and if follies, skreening themselves under this name, were marked by their proper chastisement, and treated with the ridicule and

contempt which they deserve, society would soon be relieved of much that is disagreeable and idiotical. Any thing which deviates from that regular line of feeling and action which the good sense of the generality points out to be expedient and necessary for the well-being and enjoyment of society, can never become the gentleman ; and that forwardness, or that pertinacity, or that peculiarity, of whatever kind it may be, which produces annoyance to others, so far from being praiseworthy or clever in the individual who indulges it, rather displays his mental imbecility and his presumption, and makes him a perpetual debtor to the forbearance and better breeding of his associates.

The governor's peculiarities, however, are not absolutely intended to annoy others ; they annoy himself more :—nor do they take their rise from an impertinent desire to be different from his fellow creatures. So far from this, having lived in a certain routine, he would not depart from it. The vallies of the Rhûdol he would regard in the same light as he did the

upper and lower decks of his man-of-war; and he would be as much king here, as he was over his gallant squadron in the Atlantic.

Altogether, I should not have quite liked the society at Brynn-Allyn, and my visit would have been much shortened, had there not been a powerful antidote in the society of my friend Mary Hastings.

How like a brilliant star, amid darkness and tempest, does she appear! What a mild and soothing light does she not impart, amid all the gloom of petulancy and dissatisfaction! Were I to wish the infidel to view the influence of religion upon the human mind in its fairest light, I would take him to such a scene as this. I would show him how completely the natural asperities of the temper may be brought under control;—how patience, meekness, mildness may be grafted on a turbulent and vitiated stock—for such are we all by inheritance:—I would shew him, that very pride which is his own bane, turned to the noblest and best of ends—the pride

of conquering our own selves—of changing our natural impatience into submissiveness—our presumption into humility—our restlessness and repining spirit into hope and endurance.

Mary Hastings appears to me really religious—indeed she can scarcely fail of being deeply impressed with her duties, having spent her childhood under the tuition of such parents. But she is *really* religious, by which I mean that her religion shines conspicuous in her actions—*is not made the idol of her tongue.* You can see it in the modesty of her manner, and the wish to confer pleasure,—it sparkles in her eye when any noble sentiment is uttered—it sighs on her lips when truth compels her to give pain. You may mark it in the rapid step of obedience, and in the gentle smile of acquiescence; but more than all may you trace it in the mouth that speaks no guile—that complains not of injuries—that despairs petulant retaliation, and that utters no sounds but those of gentleness and peace. It is her father's spirit,

dressed up with feminine graces—it is a practical comment upon those mild and unostentatious virtues which the gospel of Christ so firmly and unceasingly inculcates.

There is much that is beautiful in the world: nature is full of variety—full of what is wonderful and what is excellent; but in the whole compass of nature, there is nothing which meets the eye so interesting and so affecting as female excellence breaking its way through surrounding clouds of ignorance and folly, and walking consistently and uprightly in its generation.

This banishment from her family, in which my fair friend is so beloved, appears strange—it is, I have every reason to believe, an affecting instance of self-denial.

The Archdeacon did not, I believe, at all relish the arrangement at first; but he was at length prevailed upon to accede to it by the united and persevering solicitations of his wife, and of his daughter herself,

who did not fail to press upon him all the kind offices rendered towards his son by the governor. Indeed, the Archdeacon himself is an object of such superior regard and veneration at the Brynn, that his eyes are necessarily blinded to much that passes there; and he merely knows his sister-in-law and her spouse as somewhat uncouth, but otherwise well-disposed persons.

How very often we may observe, that those who are any thing but comfortable or amiable in domestic life affect great goodness abroad, and attach themselves to that conspicuous excellence, which they would be thought to admire, but which they never attempt essentially to imitate. Such is the case, I suspect, with Lady Allyn. Before the Archdeacon, and before her sister also, though with less success, she is ever playing a part, and with the usual bad taste of such persons, renders her actions a most miserable jumble of inconsistency. Thus far my own observations, accompanied with a few hints

from Mrs. Hastings, have enabled me to discover; and of these peculiarities of the Allyn family I shall probably have to record other instances as our acquaintance proceeds.

The Brynn, April.

How wonderful—how glorious is nature! How do all her operations bespeak that Divine hand, by which she is directed! I envy not the taste of those who hurry at this most cheering, most interesting of seasons, to the crowded haunts of gaiety and fashion. I pity those who are reluctantly condemned to endure them. Never does my heart expand with livelier sensations of gratitude to the Great Giver of all good than now, when universal nature, rousing herself from her long and dreary slumber, is reclothed in all her living charms! After one of these gentle showers which has just fallen, when I ramble forth into the fields and groves, or skirt the margin of our little secluded lake, I would not exchange the rising sensations that take delightful possession of my heart, for all the exultation that could afford.

Our winter is just over, for so do we designate among these vales, more particularly the first three months of the year. No longer from his icy throne does this chilling tyrant deal out upon his dreary domain, storms of snow, and pelting hail—no longer does he descend in cold and sleetly rains, or carry death and blight through the land, riding on the parching eastern blast. During the last week the sun has daily set upon a land refreshed and vivified. From the quarter where he sets, genial breezes have spread life and animation through every surrounding scene. The gentle surface of the sloping meads and pastures, before brown and bare, is now clothed with beautiful verdure. Vegetation bursts upon us in all its wonderful luxuriance; and, as each refreshing shower, falling in graceful curves from the fast dissolving clouds, softly sweeps the valley, nature, animate and inanimate, receives the welcome boon; and from a thousand tuneful throats are grateful carols wafted to the bounteous Lord of the creation. The herds that

people the valley—the flocks that range the hills—the feathered tenants of the woodland and the brake—all these hail with joy the return of genial suns and fertilizing showers; and shall not man, who is made the lord of all these, join the mighty chorus, and use his high privilege of ascending in divine meditation and thankfulness to the Author of all good?

I should think that year almost a blank in my existence, in which I was to neglect the delightful contemplation of this most interesting season, and, consequently, lose those renewed feelings of piety and gratitude which it almost necessarily awakens. How merciful, how beneficent, that Creator must be, who can permit a fallen race to inhabit a world like this—so replete with all that can gratify each sense with which infinite goodness has gifted him!

As I write this, I am seated in my own little room. The window opens to the lawn, from which I am raised by a single step. A gentle shower has just filled the

valley with gladness; and the sun, as if emulous of the fertilizing clouds, bursts upon the landscape with delightful and invigorating splendour. A bed of blue scented violets sends its delicious perfume through the room, borne upon an air, soft, calm, and refreshing. The adjoining meadows glow with their rich dress of buttercups and daisies, and the warm beams of the sun, darting through the neighbouring woodland, display the graceful and half opened foliage of the trees, in their first tints of vivid green.

And is it possible, that, at such a moment, one grovelling care—one earthly anxiety, should intrude upon a sacred hour like this? O no!—whatever was my state, whatever were my repinings, they can have no admittance here. My soul now yields herself up to the indulgence of sublime sensations, and owns with grateful awe the bounteous hand of God, whose presence is so clearly manifested in all these glorious operations. Hark! how the measured note of the jocund cuckoo fills up the interval,

when the whole united chorus of the grove have poured forth, in wild and harmonious concert, their grateful welcome of the returning spring! See how the bursting hedges and pendant boughs glitter in the sun-beam, and shake their plenteous drops upon the springing grass!—Hark, the lowing of the distant herds and the bleating of the flocks:—such a concert, so animating—so affecting—art may vainly try to equal; it cannot even imitate!

I love to ramble in the fields and woods, and to tend the opening beauties of each favourite parterre, during this delightful season. The gaudy apparel of the meadows—the life and animation of the green pastures, where hundreds of lambs wanton on the verdant carpet, and send their playful bleatings through the whole expanse of the vale, are beyond expression cheering; and as I slowly pace the woodland path, the light and bursting foliage above me, and the primroses and violets—the wild anemones and the hyacinths—the simple straw-

berry and scented ground-ivy, which beset my way, and offer their sweets to the careless pressure of my feet—these too are objects of no ordinary interest; and in comparing the variety, the beauty and quick succession of these natural gems of the grove, with the more prized and cultivated productions of the flower-garden, I find an abundant source of amusement.

Then too my garden!—the opening prospect of a winter's care! Each favourite plant to be pruned—cleansed and refreshed—some protected from the mid-day sun—some from the biting hoarfrost—others transplanted and nightly watered,—the seed to be committed to the well-prepared soil—the jessamine, the vine, the roses, and the scented clematis, to be gently trained as their vigorous shoots wanton in gay luxuriance over the walls; these, and a hundred other occupations of equal interest, make this, to me, a season of happy employment and delight, which it is seldom in the

power of any external circumstances to disturb.

How very near akin to religion itself are the pure pleasures of a retired country life! The sensations which arise from their pursuit, though temperate and quiet, are yet cheering, and all tend to direct our thoughts to Him, who is the great and unknown Cause of all that is beautiful and wonderful in nature. From the opening of the snow-drop, to the last fading rose of autumn, every thing in vegetation is surprising and interesting; and as each flower fades but to revive again in increased vigor, in this man may continually read a strong confirmation of his own hopes of immortality. Would we cease from vain repinings and cavillings at the Deity, we must retire from those haunts of men, where every thing wears a false aspect, and read the God of nature in the excellence of his own works. From the most diminutive flower to the loftiest tree—from the smallest animalcula to the largest quadruped—how admirably is

every part directed to its end, and in the succession of the seasons, the varieties of clime and surface—in the gentle oozings of the inland spring, and the mighty efforts of the ocean tides—in the light and in the darkness—in the sunny calm and the driving tempest—how excellently is every thing adapted to the object it is intended to promote—the consistency and the good of the whole.

Observing this extraordinary agreement of parts, and the incontrovertible signs throughout all nature of one great, perfect, and well-organized plan*, surely the person of feeling and observation would at once dismiss all doubts as to the expediency of external things when applied to himself; would experience an inward conviction, that *all is for the best*; and that however strange and incongruous many things in his own condition

* Look round our world; behold the chain of love,
Combining all below and all above,

* * * * *

All served, all serving; nothing stands alone;
The chain holds on, and where it ends, unknown.

Essay on Man

far from affording me any gratification, would merely cause me to regret all that was wanting. The fact is, your very imitations of the country and of rural life, and they are more or less mingled with all your exhibitions, afford a convincing argument of the superiority of our enjoyments. If you in the town seek for amusement in faint resemblances, what must be our advantages who possess the reality?

I was made for the country: I never wish to leave it. Confined to a town, I should feel as if the great object of my being was perverted and lost sight of: art, however exquisite, could never banish nature from my regard: the crowded assemblies of the gay and fashionable would never supersede in my estimation those delightful evenings I sometimes spend at Rynan; nor could morning drives, nor walks in the busy resorts of the metropolis, ever compensate to me for those quiet and easy rambles which I take alone, or in the company of those I love, over this wild and romantic country. You

will perhaps smile at all this, and say, "come and try the change." That must never be. But oh! how ardently do I wish that you were here to share in those sensations which pen cannot write, and which language would vainly attempt to express.

The Brynn.

YOUR complaint is just. My communications are indeed very little varied with the relation of domestic incidents. Yet what have I to relate that could give you pleasure, if I except the accounts I transmit from Rynan? It is better, I think, to be merely general upon topics which are not pleasing.

My proposed visit to the widow at the Duglin was accomplished yesterday, and I am still suffering a little from the fatigue I endured. Our old servant accompanied me three miles on horseback, but the road was so rough, not having been cleared from the effects of the late storms and floods, that I dismounted when we reached the Pass into the vale, and ordered my companion to wait with the horses till I returned.

There are many scenes and characters among these mountains, which hearing described, I should be apt to rank among

mere poetic fictions, did not my own knowledge prove their real existence. That the wildness of these remote tracts, and the solitary habits of many of the mountaineers conduce to the formation of peculiarities, intellectual and even personal, seems agreed upon universally. But *how* strange and *how* deeply interesting some of these mental peculiarities are, they alone can judge who have lived like myself upon the spot, a silent but interested observer.

As I pursued my way up the glen beyond which the widow lives, the wind blew cold and damp, and murmured among the leafless branches of the few stunted ash-trees that in places overhang the stony path-way. Continuing my progress, the rocks which had hitherto closed each side of the pass, receded gradually, and the valley opening, displayed before me a wild and uninteresting district, unvaried by tree or rock or brushwood, but exposed to every wind, and uncheered by the appearance of a single habitation.

I am no coward, but the chill blast

that blew uninterrupted over the heath, the wild brawling of a brook that, falling down an abrupt ledge, cast its spray upon me as I paused to adjust my cloak—the consciousness of being so far from home and unattended, and the strangeness of the family I was going to visit—these united, I must confess, caused me for a moment to wish the business of the day concluded. I think I have before told you that the widow is a protégéé of Lady Allyn's, who, in one of her more generous moods, gave her a cottage to reside in, and promised to have a regard to her other wants. You will be inclined to think that there was but little charity in settling a poor, unprotected female in such a dreary spot, when there are so many other places equally secluded, but abounding in natural beauties, and more sheltered and nearer the comforts of life. But it was the widow's own wish to settle here, and the cause of this entitles her still more to our sympathy.

She has an only child, a son, who lives with her, and whom she tenderly loves.

This young man, who is known by the general appellation of "Poor Jasper," without being positively an idiot, is totally unfitted either for employment, or for intercourse with the world. The waywardness of his temper is invincible, and the irregular action of his mind such as to be capable of no alleviation. My father once endeavoured by kindness to obtain such hold upon his affections and respect, as to influence in some measure his conduct: but the attempt was vain: he was ready to evince attachment, but it must be in his own mode, and at his own time. Yet I believe his waywardness has always been deemed harmless, and many of his peculiarities display the wanderings of a naturally generous heart.

He has been known to sit for whole days by the brook side, solely employed in rescuing the immersed flies from their finny enemies, or in destroying the snares of the insidious spider. The shepherds complain that he sometimes falls upon their dogs unmercifully when they seize the sheep, and he has been ob-

served to climb the most dangerous precipices to avenge upon the hawk and its brood the death of some innocent victim. In the winter he may be seen for days together in the barns of the neighbouring farmers reclining upon the straw, a silent spectator of the operations of the thrasher: while in summer he studiously avoids all commerce with man or beast, and is sometimes met in the wildest and most solitary spots weeping and sobbing alone, while the sun is smiling upon all around, and universal nature seems exhilarated by its influence. When the storm is high, and the shepherds with their flocks fly before the bursting tempest, Jasper is often met ascending with hasty strides the most inaccessible heights of the Rhudol, and brandishing in his hand the long staff which is his constant companion. His delight is in the most awful convulsions of nature, and he has been seen standing upon an isolated rock, midway up a fearful cataract, looking sometimes placidly, sometimes sternly, upon the headlong and dangerous uproar around him, and anon

clapping his hands and joining his piercing scream and long continued laugh in wild concord with the roar of the descending floods. The lightnings and the fearful thunder reverberating in ten thousand echoes through the different vallies, and rolling in awful grandeur over the mountains, have no terrors for him: he seems to court the vivid glare which other eyes cannot endure, and those dread sounds are but music to him which strike fear and amazement into the sinking hearts of his fellow-mortals.

Such is Jasper, and truly there is something fearful as well as interesting in the contemplation of such a character. In him the mind seems not so much to be debased by imbecility, as elevated to an extreme inconsistent with the performance of human duties; and always when I pass him in his little solitary corner of the church, or see him at a distance leaning on his staff over the brook, his eyes fixed languidly on my face as I approach, my emotions of pity are not unmixed with something almost resembling fear.

Under circumstances so peculiarly afflicting, no wonder the widow prefers this inhospitable spot to others more within the reach of observation ; and as early misfortunes have broken her spirit, and detached all her feelings from the world, the external advantages of situation are to her matters of perfect indifference.

On emerging from the pass, before you reach the path which leads over the open heath to the widow's cottage, a bridge must be crossed, which is formed of two trees rudely thrown across the brook. I had scarcely adjusted my cloak as a protection from the wind, for the day was wild and threatening, and made good my passage over the bridge, when casting my eyes forward, I was startled with the unusual sight of a human figure stretched at full length upon the turf, and gazing listlessly upon the passing waters. My fears were by no means dissipated, when leaping up suddenly, Jasper himself stood by me.

For a moment his eyes rambled around as regardless of surrounding objects, but

at length fixing upon me, they flashed with sudden intelligence :— he clapped his hands, and pointing towards the bank which concealed the cottage from view, he laughed loudly, with that unmeaning but appalling stillness of the features, which is a shocking peculiarity of mental aberration.

At this moment I felt the folly I had been guilty of in dispensing with the attendance of my companion, but I had done it without thought. I hesitated a moment what course to pursue. Jasper, too, stood still ; his eyes resumed their listlessness, and he seemed unconscious of my presence.

The whole scene was sufficiently striking, could I have viewed it as a composed spectator. But oh ! how my heart beat. These petty events are often indebted to their accompaniments for the effect they produce on the mind. Imagine the wildness and dreariness of the spot where we were ; the lowering heavens, and the widely-spreading heath, the sole witnesses of the meeting ! The costume of Jasper,

too, was accordant with the scene. His lean and stooping figure was enveloped in a grey shepherd's cloak. On his head he wore a round drab-coloured hat of the country, and this, as was his custom, was ornamented with a bunch of heath and yellow broom, hanging not ungracefully down on one side, and confined with a twisted band of briony.

At first I was inclined to return to the spot where I had left the horses, but fearing to offend him by such manifest avoidance, I determined to push onwards, and reach the place of my destination as quickly as I could. Seeing me about to depart, he again roused himself, and with a sudden motion intercepted my progress. I was alarmed, and instinctively looked round how I might retreat. "What do you fear me for?" said he, in a melancholy tone: "the sheep and the cattle do not run from me, then why should you?"—"Where did I get this?" continued he, plucking a tuft of heath from his hat, and presenting it with a mysterious air. I replied, that I could not tell. "Then I

will show you," said he, pointing to the highest peak of the Rhudol, which was now visible, towering in the distance ; "I got it where the goat never climbed, and where man never trod. Is it not a happy plant, Lady ?" Here he smiled to himself triumphantly, and, replacing it in his hat, resumed,—" And see this stone, how smooth, and round, and bright it is ! This is a fairy stone ! No one has seen it but you. It belongs to the poor fishes ; I stole it out of the lake, and to-morrow I must carry it back again."—I looked at the pebble ; it was beautiful and perfectly transparent ; and wishing to please him, I stretched out my hand to take it. " No ! no ! " said he, shuddering ; " you must not have this ! they could not live without it, for it lights them on dark nights, when they have no moon to feed by. I must take it back to-morrow." With an indignant look, he turned hastily away, crossed the bridge, and disappeared among the copse,

I hurried on, not a little agitated with this rencontre. There is something particu-

larly painful to me in suddenly confronting these unfortunate beings. Pity has been defined to be a sensation arising from the fear of suffering ourselves what we witness in others. Something of this nature is what I imagine many experience in viewing the imbecility or the wreck of human intellect. Man naturally shudders at the contemplation of that which at once humbles his self-confidence, his pride, and his lofty aspirations ; and shows him how low it is possible he too may be reduced. His pity is mingled with self-abasement ; his confidence vanishes ; the majesty of his nature he sees dethroned before him ; and he acknowledges, with pain and compunction, upon how feeble a prop all his mighty pretensions of mental excellence and infallibility are founded. Is it not wonderful such a sentiment as pride should exist, when at every step we may read a lesson of humility ?

I was not long in reaching the widow's cottage. It is situated in a dip of the hills, so as not to be seen till you come imme-

diately upon it. A little garden, enclosed with a wall of turf, and three or four stunted trees, that can scarcely be said to shelter the house, relieve in some measure the extreme dreariness of the scene. A tributary of the brook, over which I had crossed, passes the threshold, murmuring over a few stones that bar its progress, for the purpose of arresting the water, and then is again lost amid a bed of rushes and coarse grass. The exterior of this abode was indeed truly comfortless. On entering, I found the widow busily employed at a spinning-wheel. She was surprised at my appearance, for I had never been there before ; and so unaccustomed was she to the voice of sympathy, that I was some time in making her fully comprehend the intent of my visit.

She received me cordially, however ; pressed me to sit down, and made a very affecting apology for her incapability of further entertaining me. She said it was now nearly two months since she had seen any human face but her son's, for as he had taken a whim lately to fetch their

scanty pittance from the village, she had seldom occasion to trouble either herself or any body else with the performance of this necessary duty. As she spoke, she wept; not perhaps that any sudden grief overpowered her, but the seclusion in which she lived, though voluntary, yet seemed to have overcome her spirits, and rendered any extraordinary sensations too much for her nerves to support.

My own heart was too full to allow me the benefit of calm observation, and therefore, after briefly executing my commission, which was received by her with silent emotion, I took my leave, promising and intending to make a more prolonged visit when the weather was more favourable.— Perhaps the relation of this little excursion (though fancy may have tempted me to give it somewhat of a too vivid colouring) may not prove uninteresting. It is always salutary in the end, though painful at the moment, to enter the abodes of misery. Not only does it tend to lay the foundation for solid contentment within our own breasts, but it causes us to look up to our

Creator with a more lively sense of the favours he has bestowed upon us ; and it checks the overbearing arrogance of good fortune, by compelling us to consider that our fate is in the hands of the all-powerful disposer of good and evil, who can chastise and abase—bless and favour us as he will.

Ryman.

THERE are times when the mind is indisposed equally to study and to reflection, and when it is as vain as it is irksome to force it into exertion. It is on this account, that any methodical distribution of our time and studies is difficult, ~~say~~ impossible to be strictly adhered to with profit. The intellect is as wayward as the temper—it has its capricious moments, and at one hour resists that with ~~watching~~, which at another it undertakes ~~with~~ eagerness. Yet, to a certain point, ~~method~~ is excellent, and without it no ~~great~~ depth of erudition can be attained. ~~in~~ ~~some~~ degree our intellectual tastes may ~~be~~ brought under the dominion of habit, ~~and~~ by constant exercise, a man will ~~at~~ ~~the~~ appointed time generally feel the ~~want~~ ~~of~~ his books, as at another he ~~will~~ ~~feel~~ ~~the~~ ~~want~~ ~~of~~ ~~philosophy~~—that to the ~~philosophy~~—that to the

classics—and next to music—the next to poetry and the Belles Lettres, is absurd; for if, as is often the case, the mind is at the stated time indisposed to the pursuit of those particular subjects, it is vain to force its energies, when they might be otherwise directed, both with more pleasure and with more profit.

In one thing, however, I suffer no tedium, and no waywardness to impede my sense of propriety. The studies of the day are always best commenced by unfolding the sacred pages of the Bible—by learning from thence the instability of all other pursuits, as compared with that which is connected with the life eternal. Thus to begin the day, and to conclude it with prayer, must and will secure the favour of the Almighty, if it is done in sincerity and truth.

After all that can be said of the vast exertions of modern science and the transcendent lustre of mortal genius—whatever pleasure, whatever applause may be gained by our acquaintance with the literary efforts and speculations of men :

yet they are not to be compared with that wisdom, by which we are enlightened from the word of God—a wisdom which we are told “is glorious and never fadeth away: yea, she is easily seen of them that love her, and found of such as seek her.”

Among the many substantial benefits which have been the result of my residence at Rynan, the encreased pleasure which I have been taught to derive from the study of the Scriptures, is one for which I can never be sufficiently grateful. During my residence in the gay world, projects of ambition, or mere motives of momentary gratification, for the most part directed my reading. Yet, there were moments when my soul asserted its own right of unshackling itself from this world, and fixing its attention upon things not merely sublunary.

I did not, however, always read with conviction, because I was not sufficiently aware of that extraordinary connexion which runs through the whole of the sacred writings. I did not rise up from

these occasional efforts of awakened feeling much better or much wiser, because my biblical studies were neither systematic nor persevering. The historical parts of the sacred writings, I was of course well acquainted with, but my taste seldom led me to consult the pages of prophecy, and thus I lost much of that wonderful and convincing mass of evidence, upon which the authority of our faith is founded.

The conversation of the archdeacon on this subject, but more than all his discourses, in which he very frequently urges the necessity and excellency of scriptural study upon his flock, and endeavours to prepare the way for their more easily pursuing it, by plain illustrations, and such instructions as are explanatory of the general plan of revelation, have produced an almost immediate change, or rather an enlargement in my ideas, and what I before considered as a dry, but perhaps necessary study, I am now ready to maintain is the noblest, the sublimest, and most important pur-

suit, in which the life of man can be occupied.

In Herodotus, and other authors of his class, we may gather a sufficient idea of the tenets and modes of worship of former ages—in the Koran, and the remarks prefixed to it by Sale, we are initiated into the fanciful fabric of Mahometism. But how long in the present times will the man of reputed sense dwell upon these? The whimsical mythology of the Egyptians—the romantic and beautiful system invented by the Magi, and the accommodating theories of the Eastern prophet—may attract the curiosity, and even gain the admiration of some,—yet, it is but for a moment;—approach nearer, and apply reason to these, or any of the superstitions which have existed or do exist in the world, and they fall before the test and sink into their proper place among the enormous mass of human absurdity.

How different the gospel of Christ! It is arrayed in no external graces—it invites by no promises of immoral li-

ense—it offers no temptations to the proud and sensual—it glitters not in the gorgeous magnificence of oppressive pomp—it aspires not to the iron rod of power;—its professions are few and simple—its promises are not temporal,—its demands are strict and arbitrary, and it is directly opposed to “all that is in the world,—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.”

Yet uninviting as this divine system appears at first sight—it soon surpasses every other. Where they fail it rears its head: though passion would disown it, reason cannot obey; and the more the mind dwells upon it, the more the intellect is exercised upon its various parts either separately or in connexion;—the deeper is the whole soul engaged in the subject from increasing conviction of its truth, till at length it pierces to the very regions of opposition, and touches and influences the heart.

Wonderful—glorious volume! gift of ineffable mercy and benevolence from an offended God to a fallen race! There is

not one temporal blessing which infinite goodness has conferred upon mankind, which I would not rather sacrifice, than that of being able to peruse the sacred pages—faith and humility being my guides.

How does all that man has written, however ingenious, however striking or amusing, fall short of the contents of those pages which are inscribed by the finger of God himself, and which point the way to regions beyond the grave! Much more really learned—much higher in the estimation of our Father which is in heaven, and the whole dependent choir of angels—is the simple cottager who looks to the book of life, for all his hopes, his joys, and his comforts—who has but that one study, that only consolation, that only friend,—than the man of mere worldly science and erudition, whose days are devoted to all that is earthly, and who lives in the mere consciousness of human applause. The one is working silently and modestly for laurels that shall never fade—the other

sinks into the grave, and his fame survives him not. It is madly comparing time to eternity—it is grasping a fleeting cloud, to employ all our mental energies upon mere secular and perishable objects. How forcibly do I now perceive this—how does every succeeding day add force to the conviction !

In making the contemplation of the soul's probable immortality to be the great incitement to a virtuous self-denial here, certain who are called heathens read an extraordinary lecture to numbers of nominal christians. Had they been blessed with the light of revelation, with what joy would they have received the boon ; as of what inestimable value would they have prized it ! They would not have believed it possible, that with such a book as the Bible in the possession of each member of the community, the majority would be found, lightly considering, if not totally neglecting it, and that—with salvation and eternal happiness in their hands—there were many persons to be found, who systematically and obsti-

nately slighted and disregarded them,—for the vain pursuits of an hour—the giddy trifle of a moment!

To men who reason at all, how excellent a gift is revelation. Without it upon what a* boundless ocean of doubt and perplexity must they be tossed, and that too without any hope of reaching the desired haven at last. Though it is but an imperfect glimmering which we obtain of the extensive and splendid dispensations of providence, yet is it sufficient for all the purposes of our mortal career, and we are allowed the expectation, that if we use the light which is afforded us as we ought, a time will come, when all the mysterious workings of creative wisdom will be manifested to our favoured and delighted vision. The study of the Bible is peculiarly adapted for a private exercise. To me, there is a something so venerable in the antiquity—so awful in the threatenings, so exhilarating in the

* Itaque dubitans, circumspectans, hæsitans, multa adversa revertens, tanquam ratis in mari immenso nostra vehitur oratio.—T. Q. *lib. 1. 30.* CICERO.

promises therein contained—that as I read, I love to pause over the striking passages, and suffer my soul unchecked to imbibe the full spirit and meaning, and indulge in such a train of reflection as the subject may naturally awaken. There is nothing in the holy book which warrants us to regard it in a common-place light, or as a work which may be familiarly produced on any occasion—read without honor or reverence, and listened to with indifference. As the word of God, it claims our deepest veneration and respect—as declaring his will to man, and pointing the way to life or death eternal, it should be received with awful interest; as our greatest earthly treasure, it should be valued beyond every other possession, and the unfolding of its sacred pages should never be lightly nor irreverently undertaken, but only when the mind of the reader and the disposition of his auditors, should he have any, are duly prepared to receive seriously what they hear, and to store it up in their

hearts as the most important of all knowledge.

There is no excuse for those who wilfully neglect the study of the Scriptures. In such a case, ignorance can never be admitted as an apology by Almighty God for the transgression of his will. I cannot believe that a man ever yet died an infidel, who during his life had done justice to his Creator, and to himself, by perusing with a right spirit the sacred pages, and with a sincere desire to know the truth. Conviction, under the blessing of God, *must* have attended such perusal. But to plead ignorance of God's word when that ignorance is wilful, as any extenuation of the crime of disbelieving and disobeying it, is an insult to his mercy and condescension, which his justice cannot overlook, and which his severity will doubtless avenge. There is not a greater offence to the majesty of the Deity, than a disregard of the revelations which he has graciously afforded us for our guidance; and the argument before Him will not

be*, that it is impossible to sin if we are ignorant of the law, but that it is impossible *not* to sin if we are ignorant of the law, and for that transgression we shall be called to a severe account, when we are weighed in the balances and are found wanting.

The unfolding of the sacred pages is never, in the Archdeacon's family, made a hurried, and consequently, unproductive performance. Without a previous prayer, that Holy Book is never opened, and the veneration with which it is regarded by the worthy head himself, is by the solemnity and deep attention of his manner infused naturally into the breasts of all his family. His enunciation is withal so simple, and the humility of his own heart so manifest, that the truth has from his mouth double power, the attention being

* Et ne dites plus avec vos nouveaux auteurs, qu'il est impossible qu'on peche quand on ne connoit pas la justice ; mais dites plutôt avec Saint Augustin, et les anciens pères, qu'il est impossible qu'on ne peche pas quand on ne connoit pas la justice : Neasse est ut precet, a quo ignoratur justitia.—PASCAL.

wholly led towards the subject, and not distracted by any indecorous attempts at oratorical effect. I have been accustomed from childhood to listen to the occasional perusal of the Scriptures, and I have listened patiently because I thought it my duty to do so;—but never till lately did I feel a real pleasure in the exercise; and what formerly I considered almost in the light of an intrusion upon my other occupations, I now hail with delight, and relinquish with regret.

There is no point which the Arch^g deacon more sedulously labours to instil into the minds of his mountaineers, than an habitual reverence for the Scriptures; and there are few things which he more pointedly condemns and guards his flock against, than the either directly or indirectly making light of God's word. He would never have its contents made subservient to vulgar wit, nor its idioms unadvisedly introduced into familiar conversation. As containing the revelations of infinite wisdom, he would have its very name breathed with reverence, and its

contents never brought forward but when the seriousness of the occasion warranted. His exhortations in this particular, seconded by the example of his family, have had, in many instances, that excellent effect which so judicious a plan was likely to produce. There is no cottage in his district, however mean, which is not provided with a Bible, should there be an inmate there who can peruse it; and such a pride have they in this gift of their pastor, that it is regarded as a treasure which no other can excel, and is always reverently produced to the inspection of the stranger as the proudest ornament of their lowly abodes.

This feeling is further established by an excellent custom which the Archdeacon observes in his parochial rambles. If he finds the family assembled, he will frequently ask for their Bible, and after kindly inquiring into their wants, and advising them in the conduct of themselves and their concerns, he will add a few impressive words, such as peculiarly tend to instil into their minds a deep

reverential awe of the book, which, through the blessing and favour of Providence, is placed in their hands, and he will enjoin them never to forget, that having this privilege, it is dangerous in the extreme to neglect improving it to the utmost.

Where there is still remaining that feeling of respect to superior rank and learning, which the extravagant zeal of many in the present day is doing its best to expel from the breasts of the poor, this custom of parochial visitation must ever be most beneficial, and what is of great consequence, will unite the minister to his flock by no common bond of interest and affection: but where each man is taught self-dependence in religious matters—where a little education has given him the idea rather of criticising than of listening reverently to his pastor—then is the pastor's office stripped of its most powerful and most delightful accompaniment, and those visits which were once the pride of the cottage, and the stimulus to virtuous exertion, are considered intrusive and

unnecessary, and are finally altogether dispensed with. In remote situations, more particularly, this is a serious evil, and it forms an epoch in religious influence which I have heard many excellent men deeply deplore. There is a medium betwixt the superstitious fetters of popery and the lax tenets of modern liberality, which every good man would wish to see adopted, and of which an admirable instance may be found in this happy valley. Mutual dependence is necessary to the well-being of society; and those who would destroy it, can be actuated by no other feelings than those of a destructive and unamiable pride.

Rynan, May.

YESTERDAY was one of the most delightful days I ever witnessed. Indeed the reappearance of spring has brought with it ten thousand beauties which I formerly saw not, or disdained to notice. The almost instantaneous verdure with which the prolific clouds which are at this moment hanging lazily upon the sides of the mountains cover the meads and pastures is quite wonderful, and every thing here appears to me clad in a more vivid green than I ever before saw. It was Sunday. The sun was smiling in warm and frequent gleams upon the lovely landscape, and I stole unperceived from the house, that I might enjoy a solitary walk to the church. I accordingly took that side of the lake, which being most circuitous, was least frequented. My path lay through a noble but broken avenue of horse-chesnuts, which running obliquely from the extremity of the gardens, terminated

at a little creek, which is crossed in a boat. There may be more majestic, but I never saw more beautiful trees than these. The full luxuriance of the light green foliage was finely varied with the blossom which rose in gay pyramids of clustering flowers, each crowning its broad and spreading canopy of leaves. I passed on, nor stayed to admire, till a few hundred yards further, I found myself on a rocky eminence, which, overhanging the margin of the lake, commanded an uninterrupted view of the church, the mansion and the village of Rynan, and the wild recesses of the gigantic Rhûdol. What a scene was before me! Every step demanded and deserved a separate description. But what pen could describe what the imagination itself can only feebly retain? I pass it over, therefore, and leave those to paint such things whose feelings are less elevated by them than mine.

It was a still morning, and the lake was like a faultless mirror in the bosom of the mountains. To the place where I stood the sound of the village bells came

softened by the distance. The heavens at this moment were almost cloudless. On the opposite shore of the lake, from the sides of the hills, and the recesses of the valley, the inhabitants were seen slowly wending to the church as to one common centre. The young and the old, the father and his family, were all there. They were repairing to worship together that God whose eye was upon them through the clear expanse of the sky ; whose sun and whose rain made their hearts to rejoice in the plenteousness of his goodness.

I had never witnessed such a scene as the whole of that now before me, and my soul resigned itself to the most pleasing sensations. The excellence of nature was spread out before me, and the God of nature spoke in his works. The beautiful Psalm of the royal minstrel rose upon my lips, and adoration filled my whole heart. “ Bless the Lord, O my soul ! O Lord my God, thou art very great, thou art clothed with honour and majesty. O Lord, how manifold are thy works ! in

wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God, while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord*."

The assembly likewise of the people to the house of God was a sight of no ordinary interest. It was pleasing to witness the gathering together of the faithful. I knew the worship in which they would mingle there, and I felt that God would accept it. The excellence of that sobriety and dignified calmness which distinguish the services of our church, and render its religious exercises of that humble, quiet, and sedate nature, which alone can be acceptable in the eyes of the Almighty, struck me with peculiar force at this moment, and I felt that in the rational and unimpassioned "form of sound words," with which the grave and learned fathers of the reformation had framed the offices of public worship, there was a real blessing and a substantial benefit to be found,

* Psalm civ. 1. 24, 33, 34.

which extravagance of any kind, however well intended, can never confer. Wherever there is effervescence, a proportionate stillness and indifference follows; but where religious exercises are conducted by the reason, not ruled by the occasional gusts of wayward passion, they maintain one even and regular course, and have, therefore, a more steady influence upon the heart and action.

As the bells dropped, I reached the little gate which admits you into the church-yard. I here met the Archdeacon. He had come in his robes, a custom which I think ought to be more generally observed by our priests and dignitaries, for all good churchmen love to see every respect paid by the minister himself to that office which is understood to claim the reverence of others. It was delightful to see his rustic congregation assembled, and with their heads uncovered, forming a line on the green walk of the cemetery along which he passed, full of kindness and courtesy to all. The respectful group knew well the blessing

they possessed in such a pastor. He was as high in their esteem as in their affections, and that very dignity joined with mildness, which some venture to condemn, and which was so conspicuous in him, communicated an awe and respect for his important calling which a mere love and gratitude for repeated acts of kindness, could never have produced. All came there to learn—none thought of not admiring. The old still tottered to the seats which they and their forefathers had occupied for ages, to listen to a reiteration of their hopes, and to have their eyes directed heavenwards to those benefits of the Christian dispensation which they trusted through the mercy of God ere long to attain. The young and the vigorous came to be taught their duty: how to avoid all occasions of sin—how to propitiate the favor of God, and how to obtain the benefits of his grace.

Shew me, if you can, a more delightful scene, than an assembly constituted like this in the act of worshipping their Creator! All is conducted with that order

and decency—that silence and attention which become the temple of the living God, and if at the conclusion of the appointed services, the assembly disperses unintoxicated with glowing visions of bliss,—neither tortured with extravagant pictures of their own wretchedness, nor goaded into hopelessness and despair,—they at least return to their homes, convinced of the weakness of their own unaided endeavours, but renewed in their minds by the consciousness that the assistance of the Holy Spirit is theirs, if they truly seek it, and that the blood of Him who was the propitiation for the sins of the world will be brought forward as an atonement for the defectiveness of their services, if they have done their best.

I was always attached to the establishment because I was brought up in it, and I ever considered it politically necessary. But, as I left the church on this occasion, I felt that the love I now bore to it was of the purest, of the most sincere and interested nature. The excellent judgment of the Archdeacon is so effectually

displayed in every arrangement, however minute, which comes within his cognizance, that the service of the sanctuary excites a more than common interest, and is conducted with a proper degree of dignity and decorum. I have been in the habit of frequenting our best churches in the metropolis, yet I never experienced that same feeling of devotion which seems to inspire me here. Independent of the impressive style in which the service is conducted by the priest himself, there are two points particularly attended to, which I could wish more generally adopted, at least in our country churches. The whole congregation take their part in the devotions by the audible reading of the responses, and by joining in the psalmody.

It appears a strange thing—I think it ill-judged—that in most of our churches, the only voices, besides that of the officiating minister, that are raised in prayer, or praise, or thanksgiving, are those of the clerk, who is generally illiterate and ignorant; and of a few irregular and arbi-

trary parishioners, misnamed singers, who have as little harmony in their voices, or concord in their rude instruments, as they have devotion or humility in their hearts. It was the original intention of the compilers of our liturgy, that *all* the people present should take a part in the devotions of the day, and, in one part of the rubric, even they are enjoined to respond to the priest “in a loud voice.” The act of praise too, by psalms and spiritual songs, is but little understood, if public opinion coincides with present practice. How God can be glorified, either with mere scientific performances of our fashionable choirs, or the drawling and almost ludicrous attempts of the village band, appears somewhat paradoxical. For the congregation to attempt to join in with either is labour in vain, nor can I think that this is intended by the performers themselves. David, whose beautiful and sublime compositions are still not only in usage among us, but form the principal part of our choral worship, ought to be authority

sufficient in this matter ; and if we examine most of his laudatory psalms, we shall find that they were composed for the use of *whole* assemblies. Thus, in the ninety-eighth, he not only exhorts the congregation to “ sing, rejoice, and give thanks ;” but he also calls upon all nature, animate and inanimate, to join the mighty chorus. “ Let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is : the round world, and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands, and let the hills be joyful together before the Lord.” Again, in the hundred and fiftieth psalm, the last in the order of his compositions, he sums up with this plain declaration, “ Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord :” as if he had said, these songs of praise are for the use of every individual from generation to generation.

Devotion ought to be rendered interesting, for we are not perfect beings, but have oftentimes wandering and listless minds, even towards those things which most concern our peace. Where there is an established form of prayer, and the

excellence and importance of this is too manifest to dwell upon, the words and sentiments, however sublime and impressive in themselves, are apt to lose their influence by frequent repetition. Our reformers knew this; and their admirable introduction of the responses, by giving the people assembled an active part in the services, was intended to rivet their attention and keep up their feelings of devotion; an effect which their plan universally ensures, where it is reverendly and properly adopted. Without this, and without a unity of voice in praising God, the beauty, the excellence of our form of worship is lost. What ought to be interesting and delightful in the extreme, is suffered to become dull and monotonous; and though there are devout people whose deep sense of propriety will not allow their thoughts to wander far from their duty, yet the majority who have not those finer feelings, are led to consider the whole as tedious. They go, because they wish to be respectable, and to do what is right; but as to praying to God, or

praising him in reality, they do little of either.

It is unnecessary to cite any one passage, because the whole of scripture abounds with injunctions expressed or understood for a communion of heart and of voice, in the work of prayer and of praise; and it was one great instance of the pride and corruption of the Romish church that this primitive and very necessary custom was laid aside; a measure which was soon followed by the withholding from the laity, not only of the sacramental elements, but likewise of the holy scriptures themselves.

Humility, as being in the presence of God, must, of course, in all cases be observed; and though the voice of the whole congregation ascends to the throne of grace, yet should it be humbly and reverently, not encroaching upon the priest's office, nor degenerating into noise and vociferation.

The singing in the church at Rynan is excellently conducted. There is no conspicuous gallery, where a band of different

sexes and ages are allowed to exhibit themselves, and, by this ill-advised custom, to draw in large draughts of presumption and conceit. The singing of a few verses from the psalms always commences the business of the Sunday school, and thus the people are early taught to attune their voices to the work of praise. The subdued harmony of a hundred voices from their proper stations in the church, wafts the cheerful sound of praise to the ear of their Creator ; and there is scarcely an individual there, who, both in the work of prayer and thanksgiving, does not consider himself as essentially interested in the performance of both.

The neglect of this is the rock upon which many of the most worthy of our clergy stumble. A want of interest, and of community of feeling, in the conduct of our services, is a great cause why numbers seek it elsewhere. Where public worship is conducted in perfect accordance with the intentions of those who compiled our unrivalled “ Book of *Common Prayer*,” the parish church need fear no rival struc-

ture—the flimsy and unsatisfactory outpourings of extempore prayer would fail totally in fair comparison with our sublime and dignified “form of sound words;” and both to the rich and to the poor—the enlightened and the ignorant—would public worship assume its intended popular, rational, and attractive form.

There is a delight in attending the assemblies of Christians thus conducted, to which I can draw no parallel. The inward satisfaction—the multitude of indescribable sensations, which arise from and during this act of duty to the Deity, are an incontestible proof of its reasonableness and necessity. “How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts: my soul longeth for the courts of the Lord. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, for a day in thy courts is better than a thousand*.”

There is another circumstance too which I have observed at Rynan, and which, though some may affect to despise it, has nevertheless a very powerful effect

* Psalm lxxxiv. 1, 2—10.

upon the minds of parishioners in general; I mean, a becoming attention to neatness, cleanliness, and comfort, in the interior of the church. I have ever been fond of visiting these sacred buildings, from an admiration of the architectural beauty and grandeur displayed in many of them. But what would our ancestors say, could they see the shameful and unpardonable neglect, which in too many cases is exhibited towards these venerable structures, which, in ages gone by, were raised with such cost and trouble, and ornamented with such zealous care. It is strange in this land—where religion is said to have fixed her most favourite seat—it is strange to observe the neatness, the beauty, and, in many cases, the magnificence of the parsonage houses—whilst the churches, to which they are appendages, exhibit scenes of desolation, dreariness, and desertion, which reflect no honour on the Protestant name. The minister ensconces himself in his snug retreat—the elegances—nay, often all the superfluities of life grace his mansion—

while the house of God—of Him to whose bounty he owes his all, and to whose service he has solemnly devoted his life—is defaced by the dust and damp of years, and only visited, or thrown open, when necessity or the law compels it.

It is not so at Rynan; nor can I believe it is ever so, where genuine piety is resident with the minister and his flock. It has been an oversight in the ecclesiastical surveillance of many of our bishops, that more attention has not been paid to the honour of God in his holy house, and to the comfort of his worshippers. It has been, and even now is, though, I believe, with less reason than formerly, a serious charge against our establishment, that the house of God is often little better in appearance than a den of thieves; and our Lord, when he drove the money-changers and other traffickers from the precincts of the temple, plainly intimated to us that his sanctuary should receive the honour that was due, and be carefully guarded against all neglect and profanation.

With an exactness the most praiseworthy does the Archdeacon keep up the dignity of the establishment in these particulars. Cleanliness and neatness are observed equally in the interior and exterior of his church. No rank and unseemly weeds are suffered to hide the simple memorials of the poor—no broken windows—no tottering battlements—no shattered minarets, cause the pious passenger to heave a sigh; but order, and the eye of watchfulness and care, are conspicuous in every part. He hits the exact mean betwixt puritanical remissness and neglect, and popish pomp and superstition. In the interior of the sacred building, the decorations are simple and studiously modest; but they are *substantial* and perfectly accordant with the ancient and massive architecture of the place. Cleanliness and comfort are particularly aimed at. No cobwebs—no stains from damps, or rains penetrating through unhallowed chinks—are visible; and the oaken roof exhibiting a fine specimen of the expensive ingenuity of our ancestors, is still

preserved in all its pristine beauty. The decorations, or rather, I should say, the appendages of the pulpit, the font and the altar, are all in strict taste, and are preserved with much care. There is no finery, yet the effect of the whole is imposing. Every thing is plain—yet every thing is of the best. Nothing is left short. In the cleanliness and quality of his robes—in the beauty and completeness of the books, out of which he reads, and in the arrangement of the sacramental table, the Archdeacon is properly particular; and he seems never to lose sight of the injunction of St. Paul, “Let all things be done decently and in order.” “I can never believe,” said he, talking to me on this subject, “that he who framed the Levitical law can be altogether insensible to the order, and even beauty of external worship.”

Hundreds visit the church and the church-yard at Rynan; and, let us hope, that those among them, who have authority in these matters, are thereby induced

to imitate what they cannot but admire. Where the constant attention of the clergyman is directed towards the maintenance of the dignity—the comfort and decency, and the purity of public worship—he will seldom find the more respectable part of his parishioners backward in forwarding his views; and the lower orders, seeing their betters interested, will find a strong inducement to regular attendance at that holy place, from whence carelessness and discomfort, and the indifference of the pastor, too often drive them.

How amiable—how cheerful is religion at Rynan!

There are some, I well know, who will insinuate, that all this approximates to popish absurdity, and to eye-worship. It is not intended so to do. There is a medium to be observed in the conduct of these matters, for though God cannot be glorified by the feeble work of men's hands, yet his worship can be disgraced, and his Majesty impugned, by their slothfulness and neglect. I am not sin-

gular in feeling deeply on this subject ; and have been told, that a venerable bishop of our church, whose piety and whose writings must ever live in the remembrance of all good men, on viewing the order and neatness observed in the disposition of externals at Rynan, remarked with a sigh, " that he hoped sincerely, that the time was not far distant, when such decent and necessary observances would become general in the land, for they were lamentably neglected."

Ladyston.

I HAVE been now a month at Ladyston, and all the bustle of alterations and improvements having at length ceased, and our family circle being formed, we have already had a foretaste of the kind of life we are destined to spend here. Alas! what waywardness is there engrrafted in our mortal nature! How little do we set about pursuing those means which are best adapted, and were indeed intended by Providence, to insure our happiness. There are few stations where there are not incitements enough for gratitude and contentment; none where the truly religious cannot be at rest. But the eyes of men are continually more directed to what they have not, than to what they have; complaint is continually on our lips, as if it were a kind of luxury, while, in truth, it feeds and excites feelings which are at once destructive of all moral consistency, and rob us of large portions of internal peace.

In our own party all this is most unfortunately realized. Gloom and irritation are seated on the brow of my father, while tears and unmeaning regrets measure out the vacant hours of our female associates. Ladyston, which might at least be rendered comfortable, and which certainly presents a peaceful retreat, is regarded as a kind of living tomb, from which all that is gay, and lively, and exhilarating, is excluded ; and where dulness, insipidity, and melancholy, are the natural inmates. The venerable grove that skirts our side of the vale—the ever-flowing and ebbing estuary—the fine pastures and meadows that spread beneath us—and the magnificent views of the boundless ocean, which open grandly upon us as we top the eminence which shelters our dwelling, or wander round its projecting angle—all these are neglected ; and those very persons whom in the midst of gaiety and splendour I have heard to pine for rural scenes and peaceful shades, now that they possess them, turn away in anger and dislike.

Ambition ! how dearly do thy votaries

pay for those feelings of temporary elation which are all thou hast to bestow. Pride is the steed thou ridest, but disappointment precedes thee, and scatters never-ceasing cares and impediments in thy path. Happy is he who can escape from the giddy vortex of the world, ere he is wedded to its follies and allurements ; who can learn to make it rather the sphere of quiet and prescribed duties, than the boundary of all his hopes, his fears, and his enjoyments. Never is the vanity of the world, and of all that is therein, so apparent, as in those hours of heaviness ; many of which I am now doomed to suffer. However reason and religion may be brought in aid to tranquillize our own feelings, yet the distress of those we love unavoidably oppresses the spirits. Surely this is venial. There is no innate principle that can successfully ward off the wounds of natural affection.

There is at present but little peace at Ladyston. My mother, who spent her early days beneath this her paternal roof, after more than twenty years' residence

amidst the splendours of a court, has now lost all relish for former enjoyments ; and her mind, rendered vacant by the sudden withdrawing of the constant stimulus of town life, is left in a state but little equal to combat with that fretfulness and gloom in the partner of her sorrows, which declining health, added to recent circumstances, tends to increase. Upon me falls the whole burthen of relieving, as I may best be able, the uneasiness and querulousness of those around me ; and certain I am, that if I had no other principles to support me than those of mere worldly wisdom, I should soon grow weary of the undertaking. To have happiness within our reach, and to see it rudely driven from the door by the restless fancies and ungrateful repinings of those most dear to us, is doubly grievous. We lament for the loss we sustain, but still more for the infatuation which causes it.

How often do I rise from my pillow with a mind tranquil and composed ! I look out upon the beautiful scenes that

are spread before me, I consider the many comforts of which I am still in possession, and my heart is elevated with emotions of gratitude towards my Almighty Benefactor, whose favors ever attend me, and who is good and gracious far beyond my deserts. On joining my family, would I could find the same disposition there! But it is the fault of our nature, rather to look back upon what we have lost, or forward to what we may gain, than to the goods we have actually in possession. But because his nature inclines him so to do, is man excusable in yielding himself up to its dictates? Certainly not. As Christians, we are taught in whatsoever state we are therewith to be content; and if we consider that this is no abiding city, how trifling does all that fortune can give us appear, since our course will so soon be run, and the world, and all that is therein, be lost to us for ever.

For that melancholy which is produced by harassing and needless inroads upon domestic peace—by a disapprobation of

the conduct and feelings of those with whom we are nearly connected, and who surround the same hearth—there is no remedy beyond that with which religion can supply us. To give way to feelings of anger, querulousness, and discontent, is only to increase the evil, and cause us to participate in those very errors we condemn.

Patient forbearance, and that calm elevation of soul which arises from a firm conviction that all things are regulated by a superintending Providence for the best of ends, are the most honourable weapons against the inroads of domestic affliction ; and a steady and consistent example has far more influence over the conduct and feelings of those around us, than all the eloquence of persuasion, or the utmost severity of reproof. However the heart is tempted to rebel, or the passions to vent themselves in intemperance and complaint, reason and experience, if consulted, will both convince us, that not only are fortitude and pious submission to the decrees

of the Almighty more suitable to the station and dignity of man, but that they never fail at last to secure an ample reward—if in nothing more, at least in a self-approving conscience.

Rynan, October.

ROBERT, accompanied by my sister Susan, whose artless manners and laughter-loving eye you used always so much to admire, called for me at the Brynn this morning, with a request from my father that I would spend a few days at Rynan. You can imagine that they were on every account welcome visitors.

We had an interesting walk. It has been quite one of those days in which Autumn, though feebly retaining its ascendancy, yet mournfully foretels its own departure. The air was soft and humid ; the sun glanced dully upon the vallies, and accumulating vapours obscured the summits, and hovered on the sides of the surrounding mountains. There was a solemn stillness around, uninterrupted except by the rustling of the falling leaves, or the sullen gurglings of the brook, which to me is always tranquillizing, though to some it is productive

of a melancholy sensation. I can admire creative Wisdom in every variation of the seasons; and in the hilarity of the spring—the luxuriance of the summer—the pensive tranquillity of autumn, and the wilderness and desolation of winter, I enjoy the differing sensations which they produce, and praise the divine Goodness in that variety of operations which causes a continual and never-palling novelty.

How eagerly, in my visits to Rynan, do I run over each accustomed scene, revive each favourite pursuit, and sink into each former and beloved occupation. In a few hours I am in reality at home again, and might indeed never have left it. I have been just walking with my mother round the flower-garden, and taking the same interest in the collecting and arranging of the seed, in the removing of the bulbs, and transplanting of the cuttings and layers, which are the wealth of the future year, as if I was myself to live in the daily enjoyment of them all, and watch their progress, and delight in their beauties, as I have been wont. During

our short ramble I have been plucking the last remnants of the departed summer, in a drooping bouquet of a few roses, carnations, and sweet peas, which I have bestowed in our little flower basket, anxious to keep up its splendour as long as possible. They are instructive emblems of the frailty of all that is once fresh and beautiful—but I see nothing melancholy in the contemplation of their fading honours: another spring will rise upon us as well as upon them.

You express your surprise at my silence on the subject of our neighbours at Ladyston. The fact is, that where I can say nothing pleasing, I had rather say as little as possible. They do not appear to me to be at all comfortable or settled, and our visits either from Rynan or the Brynn, seem as yet to have been productive of little satisfaction to any of the parties. The truth is, that with one exception, the Tempests are proud and unbending both at home and abroad, and the gall of bitterness, on account of their change of situation, rankles too

much in their hearts not to influence their manners. My father, and indeed the whole of us, sympathize deeply with them in their misfortunes, and we make a point of endeavouring, as much as lies in our power, to alleviate their disappointment, and make their new residence as tolerable as possible. But while Mr. Tempest is so deeply overwhelmed with the transition, as to be insensible, equally to kindnesses and affectionate remonstrances, his wife and daughters, taking the opposite extreme, affect an indifference, and assume a high and lofty tone, which only serves to render their real feelings more painfully apparent. My father speaks in terms of the highest approbation of Mr. Basil Tempest, whose moderation and philosophy are the more apparent, as upon him more particularly have the effects of the family improvidence fallen. He is expected here to-morrow.

From the little I know of mankind, I can perceive plainly that they are on many occasions the worst enemies of

their own happiness. It is a very common expedient to blame fortune, when we ourselves only are in fault. My own observation, as well as the accounts you transmit to me of the circumstances of your own family, as well as those of your more immediate connexions, convince me, that much domestic evil is self-inflicted, and that though there are few families which may be correctly pronounced perfectly happy amongst themselves, yet their discomforts frequently arise from the waywardness of some, the selfishness of others, and the pride of all.

There are no lessons which men are more unwilling to remember and reduce to practice, than those of that meekness and humility which our Lord so forcibly, both by example and by precept, inculcated:—"He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief, as he that doth serve,—for *I* am among you, as he that serveth." This was one of his last admonitions to his disciples; and though, doubtless, the force of this remark was in a great mea-

sure directed against that presumption and restless ambition, which being too natural to man, was likely, as indeed it proved, to be the greatest obstacle to the pure profession of the gospel truths, nevertheless, as applied to merely domestic life, the most ignorant must allow its excellence, and even its necessity, for the production of family order and peace. In private life, pride and selfishness make dreadful ravages upon the peace and tranquillity of those who will not make a point of curbing the wayward impulses of the heart, and reducing them under some obedience, at least to the mild and humble temper of the gospel. Would men but practice as they read, what a far different aspect would the world present! Family disputes, domestic uneasinesses, injurious suspicions, contests for superiority and fancied wrongs, would be far less frequent, and by habitual forbearance and suppression of resentful feelings, life would pass on more smoothly, and its retrospect, when the hour of death came, be unaccompanied by many of

those bitter tears of repentance and remorse, which are too frequently the melancholy proofs of our own past folly.

When I consider how short our term of days is—how limited our powers—how feeble our endeavours—how dependent our state—and, more than all, how necessary meekness and resignation are to obtain for man even that small share of peace which he can expect in this world—I can feel the full force of that exclamation of the wise author of *Ecclesiasticus*—“ Why is earth and ashes proud?” Providence, however, has ordained, that this infatuation of the soul should in all cases be its own punishment, and that it interferes with the happiness of the better disposed, is, no doubt, intended as a trial, from which if they rise successful, they will be afterwards rewarded.

Though the case of the Tempests has in some measure beguiled me into these remarks, I would by no means have you to understand that what I have said is directed against them. There are great

allowances to be made for the weakness of human nature when it is tried by sudden reverses, and it is not wonderful that persons nurtured in splendour, and habituated to profusion and gaiety, should be somewhat slow in adopting the more quiet and unassuming guise necessary to bare competence and deep seclusion. All that I would argue is, that we are more the arbiters of our own happiness, than we are willing to suppose, and that domestic peace and real tranquillity of mind, are generally attendant upon a conduct regulated by the plain gospel precepts, and by just apprehensions of our situation in the world, whether relative or prospective.

I sincerely hope that you will agree with me in my ideas on this subject, because I am often compelled to have recourse to them, as my only comfort and support under circumstances which there is no necessity for me to detail.

Ladyston.

FROM scenes of tranquil happiness at Rynan, I have been suddenly recalled to attend the sick bed of a dying parent.— My father, upon whose health the cares and anxieties of office had made a visible impression, even before he relinquished them, has shown himself still less able to bear the listlessness and inactivity of retirement, and is now sinking under an accumulation of real and fancied evils.

The little philosophy which, alas! has been manifested by some of those whose bounden duty it was to conceal their own regrets in order to soften his, has, I fear, been injurious, equally to his bodily and his mental health. Had we all rallied around him—made the best of circumstances—endeavoured to cheer and raise his drooping spirits—given to him a new stimulus in witnessing our exertions to enjoy and improve the blessings still in

our possession—all might have been well, and many happy days have been in reserve for all of us. But I am daily more and more convinced, that too much commerce with the world engenders selfishness, and that the lofty path of ambition, long pursued, weakens the dominion of the heart, and teaches us to resist the gentle affections of our nature. And yet by a strange paradox, how often, under the semblance of that very sensibility which is seldom found real in those devoted to the world and its pleasures, is the most heartless selfishness attempted to be concealed, and an *amiable excess* of feeling is frequently urged in palliation of the non-performance of those duties, which real feeling and real sensibility could not bear to neglect. For several nights I have been the sole attendant upon the sick couch of my parent. Heaven forbid, that I should take any merit to myself on this account, or that I should express an impatience which I do not indeed feel; but my heart bleeds to think that there are some whose sensibilities are so acute

as to step in betwixt them and their duties. But this is not a time for anger or complaint. At such a moment, sorrow should be the sole tenant of my breast ; and yet, how ardently do I wish, that disappointment at the conduct of those who have such strong claims upon my respect or my affection, did not force itself into the broad current of my other griefs.

It is now past midnight, and I am sitting near that couch, from which, I fear, the wasted form that presses it must never again rise. At such a moment, of how little consequence must appear all that the world can give, or all that it can inflict ! With what an eye must the soul hovering on the brink of eternity look back upon the objects which it has so fondly cherished, during its short pilgrimage on earth !—Their vanity—their emptiness ! alas ! such thoughts too often come when all is over—when but a moment intervenes, and our fate is fixed—irrevocably. And yet, the dreams of our youth not unfrequently pursue us to the

very verge of existence: else, why as I gaze upon those pallid features upon which the seal of mortality is strongly impressed—does each lineament, which at one moment is composed—the next appear to change with some strong prevailing emotion, and during that awful sleep which often precedes dissolution, why do half articulate accents betray the soul still toiling after those empty visions which must so speedily disappear for ever?

What an awful thing is eternity!—How the mind shrinks under the vastness of the idea:—it would fain return to the petty realities of that trifling space, —a life; it is bewildered in the boundless maze of hereafter. Yet is it a wholesome consideration—full of comfort to the afflicted Christian, and a salutary check to the thoughtless and the proud. Life—eternity:—a few revolving suns and millions of ages:—what a strong, what an affecting contrast! And yet, do we live as if a few short years were to determine our state for ever? And are

we not told that this life is our probation?—How doubly awful then is death—how terrible the retrospect of an ill-spent life!—What a heedless race is man!—Born with the prize of everlasting happiness in his grasp, he pursues too often the day dreams of folly, and barters his eternal hopes for those faithless bubbles which burst as he pursues them, and leave, as the reward of his labours, disappointment and despair.

London.

they have fallen more gently than they might have done. My time has not been unprofitably employed during my residence in this secluded valley. If I have to record the loss of a brilliant circle of gay friends, I have made more a friend of myself; and if this world's pleasures and advantages are withdrawn from my grasp, my eyes have been directed to objects far more splendid—to hopes more substantial, and which all the changes of the world can never shake.

How forcibly does each passing event of my life strengthen my perception of the vanity of all things human. That great statesman, Sir Henry Wooton, after giving a catalogue of his many embassies and employments, declares that all his experience of the world had brought him to this conclusion—that true wisdom was to be found in retirement*; and his ingenuous biographer describes him as deserting the court, and retiring to the shades

* *Tandem hoc didicit—*

Animas fieri sapientiores quiescendo.

of Windsor, " where he might sit in a calm, and looking down, behold the busy multitude turmoiled and tossed in a tempestuous sea of troubles and dangers, while he

" Laughs at the graver business of the state,
Which speaks men rather wise than fortunate."

Though all this is true—yet men, despising the sage maxims of their elders, will consent to learn it from self-experience only. The sunshine of hope throws a false glare upon the world before them, and they are willing to think that where others fail, they may succeed.

Lonely, however, and comparatively destitute as my present situation is, the sad experience of others has been brought too immediately under my own inspection—nay, has too far influenced my own fortunes—not to have allayed in a great measure those feverish aspirings, and quelled those restless propensities which urge me again to tempt the of the worldly, or the ambi-

tious. Each day do I feel more reconciled to my lot. The mould is yet fresh which covers the mortal remains of him who went sorrowing to the grave, and shall I, with such a lesson before me of the brevity of life, and of the instability of fortune, pursue the same path only to arrive at the same conclusion?

Yet what am I now to do? The wide world is before me. There is not one friendly voice left beneath this deserted roof to whisper consolation, or to lighten my griefs by sympathy and participation. All fled the chamber of death. I alone of all that he had cherished, and so fondly loved, sat by his lifeless remains, and saw them decently deposited in their last home. That countenance, upon which in former days, the supplicating eyes of unnumbered suitors were fixed in alternate hope and veneration—was deposited in the cold tomb, unhonoured by public gaze—unattended by the pageantries of state. Yet were those venerable remains hallowed perhaps by a sincerer tribute.

The tears of a bereaved son, and the tears of an early friend, fell upon the sacred dust. Should the spirit of him who is gone have witnessed the simple, but affecting circumstances of the last offices paid to all that was left of that once so beloved, perhaps he would have preferred the out-pourings of genuine affliction to the empty gazings of senseless thousands—perhaps the mournful steps and aching hearts of a son and a friend, were more grateful than the nodding of plumes, the prancing of sable steeds, and long lines of sombre equipages, filled with those, who, while they honoured the office, forgot the man.

But, whither am I rambling? Regrets are vain, when fixed upon irrevocable objects. To me the future must now be a care. A term of years is committed to my stewardship—it is of vital importance to fill up the measure of them as I ought. Here is matter for deep and solemn reflection. Fortune has not placed it in my power to spend a life useful only

to others—I must consult in some measure my own wants, for I have in every sense to begin the world. Too well do I know the fickleness of mankind, to depend upon the services of former friends. It is to himself only that a prudent man will look in every vicissitude, whether of good or evil. To lean upon others is to sacrifice that independence of soul, which is one of the noblest attributes of our nature. “I would that in all things, my son, you depend upon yourself,” were among the last words of parental advice which I received from him, who, from youth to age had made mankind his study, and whose lessons were grounded on long and bitter experience.

If we rightly consider, we shall find, that in all the dispensations of Providence—even in those which are most severe—there is still cause to be grateful. The old maxim, that “all is for the best,” is sublimely moral, and strictly true. God’s mercies are frequently made most evident in his heaviest judgments.

In my present situation I feel all this most sensibly. Though bereft of fortune—deserted by friends—severed from the dearest ties—thrown upon my own resources, and that too without any immediate object of attainment—without any field for their available display—I know,—my heart, my reason, assure me, that I have still cause to be thankful, that good will result from this seeming accumulation of evil, and that the very clouds which now seem to overwhelm me with gloom and darkness, will open again and admit a brighter and a fairer day.

It was this disposition of mind, this firm confidence in the goodness of the Deity, that amid all his persecutions, his dangers, and his sorrows, supported, consoled, and elevated the soul of David. I envy not the man, whatever may be his other acquirements, who has not studied and laid up in his heart the excellencies of those truly divine compositions, which, proceeding from the inspired pen of “the man after God’s own heart,” God hath

himself allowed to be handed down to us from the remotest ages, for our edification and comfort. A firm dependence upon the mercy, the long-suffering, and the superintending care of Providence, is certainly one of the most delightful gifts with which our holy religion presents its true votaries. It appears impossible, after the frequent and attentive perusal of the Psalms, not to be affected with that same spirit of holy confidence in the goodness of God, which so eminently breaks forth in the compositions of David. To me, in the hours of my deepest affliction, I have ever found them a sure solace ; and when my soul has been filled with gratitude for the unnumbered benefits, which, as a Christian, I still enjoy, they have afforded a more excellent display of the real extent of my feelings, than any language I could myself devise, or than ever entered into my heart to conceive.

“ As for me, I will call upon God ; and the Lord shall save me. In the evening,

and in the morning, and at noon-day, will I pray, and that instantly, and he shall hear my voice. O cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall nourish thee; and shall not suffer the righteous to fall for ever. Yea, in God have I put my trust ; I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. He verily is my strength and my salvation—he is my defence, so that I shall not greatly fall. In God is my health and my glory—the rock of my might, and in God is my trust. Have I not remembered thee in my bed : and thought upon thee when I was waking ? Because thou hast been my helper : therefore, under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hangeth upon thee: thy right hand hath upholden me.”

Such is the spirit which I would wish to cultivate, and such is the only disposition of the heart which can render a man firm under every trial and every affliction—which can confer happiness and ease, when all around is dark and dismal,

which can create hope with all itsendant blessings, where otherwise itild appear for ever excluded. Experience only convinces us of theseths.

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THE VALLIES;

OR,

SCENES AND THOUGHTS

FROM

SECLUDED LIFE.

VOL. II.

A



THE VALLIES ;

OR,

SCENES AND THOUGHTS

FROM

SECLUDED LIFE.

“A quiet journey of the heart in pursuit of Nature, and those affections which arise out of her; which make us love each other and the world better than we do.”

STERNE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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THE VALLIES ;
OR,
SCENES AND THOUGHTS
FROM
SECLUDED LIFE.

Ladyston.

THERE is a pleasure in seizing any little incident, that appears likely to divert me in my present solitary abode, and assist to withdraw my mind from useless broodings and melancholy retrospection. Since my arrival here, the beauty and comparative liveliness of the walks, have often tempted me to stray through the little village of Ladyston, and court an acquaintance with the inhabitants, who now look up to me as their landlord, with all that feudal respect which exists only

in such remote districts. The place consists of scarcely more than twenty dwellings, which irregularly skirt the base of a bold projection of those hills which enclose our valley to the north. A few fine sycamores, together with the lofty hedge-rows and the fruit trees of the little orchards attached to the more decent of the cottages, give an air of warmth and comfort to these lowly habitations, and afford a pleasing contrast with the open wildness of the surrounding mountains.

In passing through the village, it is curious to observe the different aspect of the various cottages of which it is composed; and I at first, frequently amused myself in conjecturing the characters of the inmates from the external appearance of their dwellings. Almost invariably have I found that industry and cleanliness accompany each other, for in proportion as the habits are regular, home is rendered dearer, and its comforts are made an object of proper pride and ~~tion.~~

At the two extremities of the village, are to be found the most decided examples of neatness and disorder, which the whole assemblage can present. Entering it from the Manor-house on the right hand, is an old and miserable hovel, constructed of laths and timber, and which having long lost the perpendicular, is now supported from complete wreck, by the broad and decayed trunk of an ancient oak, which vainly stretches forth its naked and withered branches, as if still to shelter and protect it. Brambles and thorns, the woody nightshade, and the great wild valerian, grow around in uncurbed luxuriance, and the little plot mis-named a garden, with its prostrate fences and a few melancholy wall flowers and gooseberry bushes, scarcely distinguishable through the nettles and thistles, complete the scene of desolate neglect. In this abode of apparent wretchedness, resides the proudest and the cleverest inhabitant of the village.

Gamaliel, or rather (as he is designated by his neighbours) Gam Parker, is one of

those beings whose natural cunning and sagacity in all the arts predatory, are at once his pride and his subsistence. Active, bold, and enterprising, he has been from childhood the leader in every hazardous feat. There is neither beast nor yet fowl of the forest or the warren, which he suffers to live unmolested, but following them to their almost inaccessible retreats, he draws from this fatiguing and hazardous occupation, a scanty and precarious livelihood. In the whole economy of guns, bows, nets, low-bells, hare pipes, gins, snares, and vermin traps, he is a well practised adept. Of the tenants of the hill or the lake—the valley or the rivulet, none are exempt from the exercise of his skill. The true child of nature, he depends solely upon her for the supply of his wants, and he may almost be said to have no covering for his head but what she affords. His haunts being remote and solitary, he is seldom seen, except perchance early in the morning, returning from his insidious labours of the night, when he may be

known by his sturdy, but somewhat downcast look—his stately walk—his tattered, but picturesque costume, and by his gun or fishing rods loosely swung in his hand, and a brace of ugly, half-starved lurchers at his heels.

The district of which Rynan is the humble metropolis, contains, and indeed as much as two thirds of the whole constitute, one of the ancient royal forests. For centuries, the proprietors of the manors of Rynan and Ladyston, have been alternately the chief rangers, and owing to the remoteness of the situation, have been seldom disturbed in the absolute exercise of their dominion by the superior powers. At no very remote period, large herds of deer peopled the extensive wastes, and were at once the pride and diversion of the gentry and yeomen of the country. During the times, however, of civil commotion, much sheltering wood was at various periods wantonly destroyed—the common people were suffered lawlessly to invade the rights of the forest—sequestrations and

resumptions of land by the crown drove many proprietors of the soil away, till this once populous and not unimportant district dwindled into comparative insignificance, under the united evils of abandonment and neglect. The scites of many a village and hamlet, now no more, are pointed out by the old men, to the enquiring traveller, and on many a rising knoll, encircled by its gladdening stream, are still seen, either in ivied ruin or converted into the ill-sorted dwellings of the poor—the embattled mansions of former and more prosperous days. The “Forest” retains now but the shadow of its former glories. Where one broad and doddered oak now spreads his gigantic arms across some mountain chasm or solitary dingle—where one clump of the clinging ash, or one grove of the hardy pine are to be seen, fond tradition records a hundred, and where one timid stag now bounds with fearful speed across the open down, seeking some almost inaccessible covert, the time was, that whole herds wantoned in

comparative security, and boldly faced the admiring traveller.

The family of Gamaliel Parker have always claimed a kind of respectability, (sufficiently dubious,) inasmuch as they never were known to labour in the land, or attend to any regular calling. They were a sort of hereditary verderers of the forest, and from father to son, for several generations, made this mere nominal office a plausible excuse for every species of depredation.

My father having been for many years the ranger, and of course, from absence and more engrossing employments utterly supine in the execution of his office, no check has been put to these practices, and providing the usual acknowledgments from the verderer, in virtue of his situation, were duly forwarded, he was perfectly satisfied. These consisted of a fat buck on Holyrood-day, and a jolly hind at Candlemas, though the fathers of the village are fond of asserting, that there was a time when a roe-buck at Easter,

and a wild boar on Purification day, used to form part of the ranger's perquisites.

Parker's wife has been long dead, and his children, with the exception of one daughter, are gone, no one knows, and no one seems to care, whither. Two sons were taken away by a party recruiting for the West Indies—another ran off with a gang of Dutch smugglers he met with on the coast, and a fourth was drowned while fishing on the Brynn-Allyn lake. Jane, however, who was the youngest child, seems to make up to her father for the loss of all the rest. She is decidedly the prettiest girl in all the vallies, and though scarcely nineteen, might, if the gossips are to be believed, marry any young substantial yeoman in the district. She is an extraordinary young woman, and appears to possess, in a singular degree, all the proud and independent characteristics of her family. Though often invited, she is never seen at any fairs, wedding feasts, or may-pole dances. She was never at any school, and can

neither read nor write. Unlike her sex, she has never been known to form any friendships with her young neighbours; and though she does not avoid occasional conversations, yet she never seeks them.

Her seclusion, however, is not accompanied with any morose or selfish exhibition of feeling. It is the result of situation, and of a mind peculiarly formed. She is ever active in her own business, and perfectly indifferent to the concerns of others, unless her assistance is really required. Her countenance, though serene, is of a pensive cast, and her manners, though soft and feminine, yet powerfully insinuate that she has a decided objection to any unnecessary interruptions. Her whole demeanour would convey the idea, that she is most pleased when least noticed.

The verderer, though dependent upon his daughter for all the little comfort he possesses, yet so far from exhibiting any fondness for her, is a harsh and a severe parent. She bears, however, with all his

roughness as a matter of course, and takes little interest in any thing but in preparing for a distant market, the returns of his labours, or in making the neatest appearance she is able, from the scanty stores their poverty will allow. The cottage is divided into two compartments, which have their separate doorways. The furthest removed, which is occupied by her, is the store-room for all the household implements, and whatever else is most valuable—it is her sole abode, and the only part of the dwelling which can be pronounced at all habitable, or even weather-proof. The other part presents a remarkable contrast in the interior. There the father sleeps amidst a confused heap of nets, rods, snares, traps, and fowling pieces. Rudely formed implements of various descriptions are scattered about in every direction; and the straw-couch of the dogs, and the scarcely less humble mattress of the master, occupy the only two sheltered corners of the room. In the winter months a fire is kindled on a flat stone, in the middle, and the smoke

has no other vent than a large hole in the roof, over which the neighbouring oak vainly spreads his half withered branches.

Thus do these villagers live. Were the whole of the surrounding habitations to be swept away, and the vale become a complete desert, it would make no difference to them, providing their means of subsistence remained. They live on from day to day, as if life was a mere scene of endurance, and those gratifications which are eagerly sought after by people in their station, they appear to regard as unworthy of pursuit. They take no part or interest in the gossiping of their neighbours—display no sympathy in their feelings or pursuits, but seem to think it a most desirable thing to be suffered to bear their own burdens, and to live and die in peace.

At the other extremity of the village is situated a house, the external appearance of which, as well as its inmates, afford a remarkable contrast to those just described. Within its walls reside an

elderly personage, formerly serjeant of infantry, now a pensioner, together with the diminutive but well-fed partner of his fortunes, and his daughter, a thin and precise young person, of about five and twenty. I seldom pass this house, which is a formal structure of brick, with a chimney at each end, and a narrow door between two narrow windows, without finding the serjeant keeping guard at his garden gate, which opens upon the road, with a narrow flight of five or six steps. He might be a figure placed there for effect, by the tasteless hand of some civic proprietor—so straight, so still, so composed, so always the same does he exhibit himself. He still wears his uniform, and says he always will, and, certainly, his trappings are as neat and clean, and bright, as pipe-clay, brick-dust, and regular brushing, can make them.

His house and his garden are in perfect accordance with his own appearance. There is nothing exuberant. All is straight, formal, and precise. Not a

flower is suffered to run into luxuriance—not a weed to shew itself on the many triangular beds, all duly radiating from well proportioned centres—not a white pebble to be displaced on the trim and narrow walks. No jessamine, no roses, no wanton vine is suffered to trespass over the surface of the unstained, white-washed front ; and the white windows, and white door, and white paling, and white garden gate, seem to bid defiance to the contaminating finger of indolence and dirt.

In a pleasant nook of this little pleasure ground, somewhat raised by an artificial mound, and overlooking the road and much of the village, stands a sentry box, in which the serjeant may be seen every fine evening quaffing his sober glass, and puffing away his accustomed quantum of tobacco. It is entertaining to see him, but more so to stay and converse with him. Making up for no scanty portion of ignorance and presumption, by a most laughable pomposity of manner and diction, he tells his stories, and volunteers

his opinions. He deals in hard words, which he as constantly misapplies, and to every little incident of the day he has a parallel within the compass of his own experience. The range of his own ideas is very limited; but he is not without ingenuity in retailing the sayings of other people. If he tells a story twice over, which he is much in the habit of doing, it is always in precisely the same words; and when you have been a few times in his company, you have heard all he has to say, and may form as correct an idea of his general habits and character, as you would after the lapse of years.

Of these people, as well as the remainder of my village neighbours, I have lately been endeavouring to make friends; and what appeared at first to offer any thing but an inviting task, I now find both pleasing and salutary. It is the duty of every one, who, by the blessing of Providence, is placed in a superior station, to look upon his poorer and more humble brethren with an eye of compassion. In the humbler stations

of life, tyranny, and the more violent passions of the heart, frequently exist in a force and a degree to which the more refined ranks are seldom liable; and in my various visitations among the cottages of this retired valley, I have found much suffering and discomfort, which the combined evils of ignorance and uncurbed natural propensities, added to the want of influential interference, must ever create. I anticipate, with much interest, the result of my exertions, in correcting many abuses; and if my speculations upon human character can be made productive of human happiness, I have abundant cause for self-congratulation.

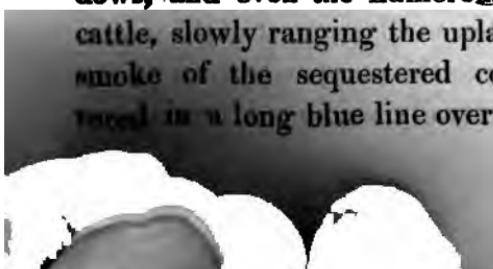
The Brynn.

YOU marvel in your last at the real relish I evince for country enjoyments, and the “insipid repetitions” of retired life. Had you been one of our party yesterday, I am certain you would have been delighted; and if you had not become a complete convert to my “antiquated notions,” as you term them, you would at least have been induced to treat them with more respect. My father, Mr. Tempest, my sister Elizabeth, and myself, have accomplished the arduous task of ascending the Rhûdol, the cloud-capt haughty monarch of our vales. Would that I had the inspired pencil of some descriptive bard, to convey to you even a small portion of those feelings of delight and of awe, which more and more elevated my soul, as we gradually ascended to the summit of these tower-

The contrast from what is dark, gloomy, and confined, to what is bright, open, and expansive, is admirably exhibited at the commencement of this little tour. The spot from whence it is usual to begin the ascent is a dark, gloomy dingle, the narrow recesses of which are enclosed, and, in some places, overhung with broad masses of rock and foliage, thrown together in so wild and fantastic a manner, as to give the idea of some recent and ruinous convulsion. Gradually ascending this glen, we at length emerged through a grand, natural archway, upon the more open surface of the mountain. Huge detached masses of rock frequently impeded our progress; and as we looked up to the almost perpendicular heights above us, we shuddered to think how small a particle of those stupendous natural barriers, if loosened from its position, would hurl destruction upon the adventurous travellers below. The distance from the glen to the summit of the mountain, owing to the many windings of the path, is generally accounted four miles.

To me, however, it did not once appear irksome, so completely was my mind engrossed with the various objects which each successive reach spread before us. It is true Alps on Alps seemed to arise, but each fresh eminence, as we gained its summit, presented something new to reward our toil.

From the base to the top of the Rhûdol, the same objects were continually changing their position, and assuming different combinations; and each step of our ascent presented to the eager eye a wider and still wider range. At first many of the surrounding hills gave an idea of superior altitude to the one we were ascending; and their bold, dark outlines, seen in the blue concave of heaven, appeared inaccessible. We admired the vallies, which skirted their broad bases—we could see the brooks winding in numberless meanders, through the green meadows, and even the numerous droves of cattle, slowly ranging the uplands. The smoke of the sequestered cottage homed in a long blue line over the wood,



which sheltered it, and the lightly flitting cloud cast its shadows upon the landscape as it passed.

Ascending still higher, the cattle, the streams, the cottages, and the woods, seemed to disappear. The villages of Rynan and Ladyston were distinguished by their smoke; and the placid lake of the former, and the irregular estuary of the latter, seemed quietly reposing in the bosom of their sheltering hills. The whole extent of “the Forest” was spread before us—a vast and trackless waste, brown with heath or dark with wood—in one place, spreading into extensive lawns and flats—in another, breaking into lofty and abrupt ridges, and varied with deep and savage glens.

On gaining the summit of the Rhûdol, we stood still and surveyed the scene with astonishment and awe. No word was uttered. One sentiment—one feeling, appeared to affect us all. Never does man feel his own insignificance—never does his soul acknowledge the omnipotence of Creative Wisdom so sensibly, as

when he finds himself thus elevated beyond the abodes of man—having far below him the eagle's haunts, and the browsings of the adventurous goat—brought as it were to a close communion with clouds and tempest—the world prostrate before him, and his imagination expanding and ranging as boundless as the distance which his eyes embrace. The scene around us was indeed wonderful and striking. The peak on which we stood, not more than twenty or thirty yards in circumference, far out-topped all its aspiring neighbours, and exhibited on every side a prospect vast and unbroken. Those dark mountains, which, at the commencement of our ascent, appeared to rival, if not surpass, the one on which we stood, were now sunk into comparative insignificance. Many a brown hill and bold projecting knoll, which grandly rose from the plain, now almost undistinguished, seemed to mingle with it. More distant mountains filled the horizon—more distant plains and vallies opened to the view, and the district of Rynan,

with its forest, its vales, its lakes, and its rivers, appeared but a very small portion of that vast map which was now spread at our feet.

To the westward of Ladyston, the smoke of whose village and mansion I fancied I could distinguish beyond its rocky defile—the ocean spread its boundless waters, till lost in the haze of the horizon. On its wild and trackless bosom, as far as the eye could reach, an island was visible, rising from the waves like a misty cloud, while on every other side diminished mountains, distant ridges, frowning in gloom, or lighted up with the partial glances of the sun—rivers and streams now dancing in light, now obscured by a passing cloud, or an impending precipice—lakes reclining sullenly, or expanding smoothly in the dark bosom of the hills, and hills swelling range above range almost to infinity—these were the characteristics of the scene. But how they blended, and, at every motion of a cloud, and every burst of a sun-beam, presented fresh and

beautiful combinations, I dare not venture to describe.

I stood long—I could indeed have remained much longer, contemplating the scene around me, awe-struck and absorbed. It was a luxury, undisturbed, to give way to my sensations. I felt as if I wished to be alone. My fancy was raised to that high and enthusiastic pitch, that it pined for the full luxury of indulgence. Mortality, with all its petty interests, was thrown at a distance—the soul expanded to higher visions, and loved to wanton in its temporary elevation.

Whatever arguments you may advance to the contrary, I must ever maintain, that it is only in sublime communion with nature, that the mind discovers its own powers, and calls them forth into lofty and befitting exercise. Entirely confined to the narrow circle of domestic cares, or the puny objects of mere worldly pursuits and gaieties, it lies dormant and inactive; but when brought into close connexion with nature, with her wonders and her vastness, it rejects

the shackles of time and place, and proves its title to immortality, by its lofty aspirations towards those far and unknown regions, from whence it derived its existence.

In the enjoyment of all these feelings, we spent more than an hour on the summit of the Rhûdol. What a treat would it have been to you, could you have heard the sentiments which, at intervals, proceeded from my dear father's lips ! He said he had frequently ascended the Rhûdol, but had never experienced the same degree of excited feeling as on the present occasion. How delightfully, how benignly, did he moralize upon man and upon the world he inhabits ! On noticing the stupendous operations of nature, so awfully visible around us, how little did he make man appear ! For how short a space is he allowed to play his part in the grand scheme of the universe ! How many successive generations have passed away, and still these hills and vallies remain the same, and probably will so remain, till that solemn hour, when at the word

of the Omnipotent, all created nature will crumble into atoms. The creation, the deluge, and the final destruction of that wonderful fabric, the dissolution of which is solemnly foretold, are subjects which cannot fail to suggest themselves to the reflecting mind, finding itself thus exalted to the clouds, and the world, as it were, lying prostrate before it. And how awful these subjects are ! How helpless—how dependent is man ! How little—how powerless does he appear when his mightiest and proudest efforts are compared to the workings of nature !

But you are, ere this, weary of moralizing. Pardon my garrulity, for the feelings of yesterday are still unsubsidied. I hope the time will come, that you will experience them yourself, and that in ascending the Rhûdol you may have companions as truly delightful, and as piously sentimental, as I had.

We descended the mountain before sun-set in the direction of the Brynn, whole party were expected. It's arduous progress, we

came suddenly upon a point, which commanded a view of the stern vale and lake of Brynn-Allyn, and about the same distance further down, we had an opportunity of contrasting it with the sweet—the peaceful—the beloved vale of Rynan. I was walking with Mr. Tempest. Unconsciously I gave way to disagreeable reflexion, and tears filled my eyes. Oh my friend, you have never known what it is to be separated from a home you love! A broad gleam of the sun rested at that moment upon the lake, and the dear mansion at Rynan—the veil of evening was already spread over the deep and savage vale of the Brynn. Do you wonder at the melancholy comparisons that struck upon my heart? I know you can excuse them. At this moment, my eyes suddenly caught those of my companion. By their earnest and compassionate expression, I felt that he knew and sympathized in my feelings. I was confused—but still there is a comfort—an inexpressible comfort, in the secret sympathy of those you esteem,

After all, however, it is not situation that ensures happiness. Change the inmates, and the glooms of Brynn-Allyn would be more welcome than the sunbeams of Rynan. But I am wandering to a forbidden subject. Adieu. May domestic peace ever enlighten the hearth of my dear friend.

Ladyston.

THE more widely dispersed inhabitants of this valley, and the neighbouring mountains, have been the objects of my enquiries during the last few weeks. The general impression I have received from the multitude of my domiciliary visits, has not been altogether pleasing. Towards myself individually, there is an extreme of feudal respect manifested, which I could almost wish somewhat moderated, inasmuch as it prevents my entering on all occasions into that familiar converse, which it is my object for the present at least to encourage. The farmers and peasantry I find equally superstitious in all that is wild and fanciful, as the surrounding mountaineers; but strange as it may appear, they differ from them in having imbibed strong and peculiar religious prejudices. The priory church, with three dependent chapelries, all tolerably endowed, were suffered to remain

for the edification of this division of the district, by the commissioners employed by Henry the Eighth, in the suppression of the monasteries. From the remoteness of the situation, the eye of the ruling powers was seldom directed to the state of the ecclesiastical discipline in this extensive parish ; and accordingly my mother's ancestors, who were the patrons of the living, and violent in their predilections for the reformed doctrine, placed over the people a succession of pastors deeply imbued with the mysterious tenets of their great master, Calvin.

One in particular, whose name (Phineas Best) will never be forgotten in the district, was the means of exciting the minds of his parishioners to a pitch of political and doctrinal enthusiasm, the ferment of which, though many years have elapsed, has not yet totally subsided.

A great sufferer for non-conformity, both by imprisonment, fines, and banishment, this man at length found an asylum at Ladyston, where, by the imprudent zeal

of a widow of the family, who at that time held the estate in trust for her son, he was presented to the living and the patronage of the annexed churches. These were in due time filled by fellow-sufferers in the cause, who, like himself, were glad to give way somewhat before the storm, and find an asylum here from the odium into which many of the non-conforming clergy had fallen in consequence of the violence both of their opinions and measures.

That they got a footing here at all as established clergy, would be a matter of surprise, did we not know that several of our bishops secretly favoured the doctrines of non-compliance, and admitted such as professed them to considerable endowments. The consequences might be easily foreseen. The people were zealously instructed in notions of civil and religious liberty, sufficiently confused and inconsistent in themselves; but which, by their plausible surface, and the usual aid of abused scripture authority, were brought forcibly home to the narrowness

of their comprehensions. Phineas Best was indefatigable in his exertions, though he prudently forbore any external appearances of hostility to the established forms, or the excitement or expression of any immediate violent feeling.

He was probably sincere, and his energy might have been eminently useful, had his reason and his taste suggested to him views more moderate and practical. He visited the cottagers—he joined in their frugal fare—he affected an interest in the private affairs of each, till at length, by the influence which he acquired, the whole fabric of former sentiments and habits was abolished, and Geneva itself could not have presented a more truly puritanical communion than existed in a few years in the vicinity of Ladyston. Feasts and holidays, once so valued, were given up—the observance of days was deemed superstitious—sports and amusements were condemned as profane—the doctrines of irresistible grace, of miraculous conversion, of free-election, and final perseverance, were esta-

blished, and an unrelenting hatred to the church of Rome, and to the persecutors, whether Catholic or Protestant, of the non-conformists, with a proportionate love and veneration for the memory of the martyrs, were fervently urged and eagerly embraced.

I was astonished at the accuracy with which tradition had handed many things down, but more so at the captious and pertinacious humour manifested, when any of these favourite topics were touched upon. In proportion as the memory of this puritanical preacher is revered, so are his precepts and his doctrines hoarded up as of almost equal authority with the word of God itself. The sneers of their neighbours—the threats of former Archdeacons, and the expulsion at sundry times of some of the most violent, by the landlords upon whose estates they lived, have rather tended to rivet opinions hastily imbibed, and the doctrines they profess, have been handed from father to son, accompanied with affecting instances of private suffering in the glorious cause,

and exhortations to perseverance in the same course.

What first drew my attention to this state of things, was the extraordinarily thin attendance at the village church. At Rynan, particularly when the weather is fine, not a seat is unoccupied, and many are thankful to obtain a place in the aisles, in the doorway, or at the windows, in order to join in the established worship. At Ladyston, alas! how different! With the exception of the Serjeant and his family, the Verderer and his daughter —a few old men and women who occupy a miserable range of alms-houses, and a few children who are sent to be out of harm's-way, there are no regular church-goers in the village. From the neighbourhood, two farmers and their families, who make a boast of this meritorious distinction which they have derived from their ancestors, are constant during the summer months, and these, with an occasional passenger and a few labourers, who have migrated from some other district, form the whole of the con-

gregation, exclusive of myself. Besides this desertion of the mother church, I find, that one only of the chapelries is kept open for divine service—the other two have been for several years totally abandoned, and are now going to speedy decay.

At first, I was indignant at this state of things, and, as a principal proprietor of the soil, was tempted to exclaim with great vehemence against so strangely organized, or rather disorganized a community. The natural ardour of my own feelings, roused by the conviction of the fatal delusion under which the great majority of my fellow-parishioners laboured, suggested to my mind very decided measures of reproof, and even of coercion, and I was about to put my plans to the test when the Archdeacon came to visit me.

To all my descriptions he lent an attentive ear—he joined in my lamentations on the singular state of things in my neighbourhood—he assented to my strong feelings of disapprobation, but

when I stated to him my resolves, he gently laid his hand upon my arm, and with one of those smiles which always reach my heart, he begged me to give myself the advantage of a little more enquiry and reflexion, before I ventured to interfere in matters of such vital importance. " You cannot suppose," continued he, " that during my long residence in this country, and more particularly since my appointment to the Arch-deaconry, that the state of things in this portion of my district has escaped my observation. But I know the danger of precipitation, and was unwilling, by an untimely and powerless interference, to hazard any thing. The present incumbent is old and superannuated, and his death has been long expected, both from his infirmities and his very advanced age. In the event of a vacancy, it was ever my intention to communicate with your family concerning the nomination. I was convinced that I should be attended to, and then the field was open for fair and lawful exertion. We have only to consult

the pages of history in all ages of the world to discover, that in matters which concern the direction of men's consciences, and the rooting out of prejudices religious or political, too much caution cannot be used. If the natural obstinacy of mankind is once roused by real or apparent persecution, your cause is in nine cases out of ten irrecoverably lost."

And certainly the history of mankind does abundantly prove this assertion. Waywardness is an inherent infirmity of the human mind. Attack a man's prejudices with violence, and opinions which he merely held because he had been taught them, become his own, and are rendered dear to him, because his pride calls upon him to defend them, and acts as a stimulus to resistance. But accompany a man in his doctrines as far as you are able, coinciding in some, making allowance for others, and railing openly and violently at none—he will be the more inclined to conform by degrees to what is more rational and

orderly: and finding that he has no enemies to combat, he will at length, almost imperceptibly to himself, swim with the stream.

Till my conversation with Mr. Hastings, I was not aware of the full extent of the non-conforming spirit in the parish. Not only do the great majority of the people abstain from joining in the established worship, but many of them are members of private associations, which meet in barns and open places, where choosing some ignorant and unlettered person from their own number, he officiates as occasional minister, praying and preaching, if preaching it may be termed, extemporaneously. And in all this they are thoroughly persuaded, that they render God an acceptable service. Others there are, who take advantage of this general feeling of discontent towards the Church, to excuse their own neglect of all morality and all worship. They will exclaim against bishops and other dignitaries of the Church—against the apparel of the clergy—against the forms in bap-

tism and marriage—against, in fact, they know not what, while in the meantime they are themselves given up to licentiousness and worldly mindedness—governed entirely by each prevailing passion, and using the perhaps more conscientious scruples of their forefathers as a cloak for evil*.

In theory, I have always seen the absolute necessity of an Established Church—facts now convince me of the deplorable state of those who are without it. The Archdeacon's advice has roused my reflexion, and I see the deep importance of his suggestions. Would that it were in my power to be the means, either directly or indirectly, of effecting a change here. At least the consideration of the subject will afford me a pleasant and a useful employment.

* Religion, when debased by false opinion, is inconsistent and unaccountable in its operations—its morality is not to be depended upon.

Ladyston.

VIRTUE decidedly consists in a mean. Excess or defect are equally pernicious. Strange as it may appear, in religion itself this rule holds good. To be righteous over much, is as dangerous to the human character as to be righteous over little. By being righteous over much, a man is understood to claim to himself, either the actual attainment of, or the capability of attaining, a much higher degree of spiritual perfection, than is consistent with the degraded state of our nature. He, insensibly perhaps, in externals puts on the saint; internally, he is but a man. Hurried on by the ardour of his spirit, he fancies himself one apart from the multitude—he comes forward buoyed up with lofty pretensions, and esteeming himself the intimate friend and favourite of heaven, he forgets, or wilfully overlooks the

insidious workings of Satan. Spiritual pride is the most favourite engine of the devil. A man having once asserted his own superior sanctity, is obliged to maintain it by an apparent consistency of conduct. Hence, the temptation to hypocrisy. Equally weak with his fellow mortals, he dares not appear so :—equally liable to error, and even to deviations from strict moral rectitude, he is obliged to have recourse to artifice and dissimulation to conceal them. Unfortunate man that he is !—his very love for the character of superior sanctity leads him to the commission of errors which are doubly offensive, because they are hypocritical.

The lofty pretences of puritanical zeal are radically destructive of the whole essence of genuine Christianity. Our Lord, when he washed the feet of his disciples—when he condescended to eat with publicans and sinners—when, himself the Creator of the universe, he descended into the river Jordan to be baptized by a mere man—proved by his ac-

tions, as he did frequently and most energetically by his sayings, that the very essence of the new dispensation which he came to publish, was humility before God and before man*. The puritan thanks God that he is one of the elect, and having been once in a state of grace, for him there is no final reprobation. The humble follower of Christ thanks God likewise—but on what a different principle! He is full of gratitude, because under the curse of sin he is graciously allowed the privilege of working out his salvation—but it is with fear and trembling: he is conscious that in himself there is no good thing:—aware of the weakness of his nature, he guards against relapses, and after he has done all he can, diffident and humble to the last, he reposes on the merits of his Saviour—

* “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly,” &c. Rom. xii.—Thus strongly does the apostle corroborate his Lord’s sentiments.

supported by hope, not elated with certainty.

The puritan wrestles with God—he remonstrates, he dictates, he calls God to account. The humble christian stands afar off—he feels much, he utters little. Full of the majesty of heaven, he dares not lift up so much as his eyes. Sensible of his own unworthiness, he adores and supplicates; conscious of the immeasurable distance between the Creator and the created, he bows with submission to every divine decree—he worships in spirit and in truth. The puritan, looking proudly from that eminence upon which his own self-sufficiency has placed him, considers the majority of his fellow mortals as fated to perish—doomed to everlasting torment, not because they have rejected God, but because, by his absolute decree, God has from the beginning rejected them. The humble christian looks upon all his fellow-travellers through this vale of tears, as on an equal footing with himself—all as reconciled to God through

the merits of Jesus Christ—all as equally capable of working out their salvation—all as invited to seek what they shall surely find, the assistance of the Holy Spirit in their spiritual warfare.

The puritan, rejecting the controul of all those ordinances which are so necessary for the dignity, the order, the decency and the uniformity of worship,—wildly riots in the excesses of his own imaginations—suffers his over-wrought zeal to hurry him into extravagances and absurdities which cannot but be highly offensive to God, and which deservedly merit the condemnation of sober-minded men. The humble christian submits to the ordinances of his national church, knowing that they are framed in wisdom and in moderation—that they are a safe and authorized vehicle for the expression of his wants and the performance of his religious duties—that they secure to him that order and decency which is recommended by the apostle, and ensure that unchangeableness and stability of doctrine and of worship, which must ever be

beyond measure desirable to the great bulk of the religious world. The puritan rests his belief on isolated and obscure passages, which he distorts to suit his own favourite tenets ; the humble christian reveres the interpretations of the church, and finds the articles of his belief upon the general tenor of the whole Scripture. The puritan, arrogating to himself the peculiar influences of the Spirit, denies that laws were made for him ; the humble christian, aware of the general corruption of human nature, upholds lawful authority—respects the laws as the sole guardians of social order, and thinks his allegiance to God is properly displayed by allegiance to those powers which God hath ordained to rule over him. The puritan is a firebrand in his generation ; the humble christian a burning and a steady light—not flaming forth at one time, and waxing dim at another, but ever keeping itself in moderation, having a constant supply of oil

in the lamp, perchance the Redeemer cometh*.

The human mind is not formed for the duration of extraordinary excitement. In proportion to the violence of the feelings, is the rapidity of its subsidence. In all ages, and in all nations, such has been and such ever will be the characteristic of humanity. That there are individuals, and even bodies of men, who will for generations, perhaps, maintain the feelings and principles which enflamed their fore-fathers, no one will disallow: but such is not the case, nationally speaking. Unless fed by opposition and persecution, all mental excitement will soon be exhausted: its very excess destroys it.

An intemperate zeal should in all things be carefully guarded against. To run

* “ No character in human society is more dangerous than that of the fanatic; because, if attended with weak judgment, he is exposed to the suggestions of others; if supported by mere discernment, he is entirely governed by his own illusions, which sanctify his most selfish views and passions.”—Thus writes an eminent historian and philosopher.

into one extreme, is the sure prelude of hastening contrariwise into the other. In politics, the immoderate love of liberty is the very parent of licentiousness, and then despotism,—while on the other hand, rigorous aristocratical feelings sooner or later engender republicanism. In religion, the lukewarmness and inattention which arise from ease and fancied security, by naturally fostering abuses, give rise to complaint and remonstrance, and these gradually increasing from zeal to enthusiasm—from enthusiasm to fanaticism—not unfrequently terminate in determined infidelity, or at least, in an indulgence of wild speculation, wholly inconsistent with the gospel, and even with the temporal welfare of mankind. Of all this, the history of our own country will give abundant proof. After madly indulging itself in the wildest extremes of apathy or fanaticism, be it in religion or in politics, the general good feeling of the nation has ever in the end resumed its sway, and the medium so often lost sight of, become at

length the anxious object of pursuit to the great majority.

Wherever in things ecclesiastical or in things political, stability is to be ensured, the groundwork must ever be, moderation*. Viewed through the intemperate eye of zeal, or the narrow vision of prejudice, many measures appear feasible and proper which the cool determinations of the judgment, would at once condemn. Thus, the credulous obstinacy of the Papist would overwhelm us with ceremonies and superstitions, destructive of gospel simplicity; and in some cases even, if experience is to judge, of strict moral restraint, while on the other hand, the wild fanatic would overturn all order and regularity, leave each to form his own creed and worship in his own way, thus virtually driving religion from the land,

* Monk, the famous parliamentary general, in addressing the House previously to the restoration, admonished them "as the fruits of that experience which they had gained by so many years of toil and bloodshed, to exclude both the fanatical and the royalist party from the government; their ultra tenets being equally detrimental and of liberty."

and substituting in its place extravagance, impiety, gloom and hypocrisy. Between these extremes, the bulk of the nation, after many struggles, has adopted the mean, neither abolishing altogether the more wholesome ordinances and ceremonies of the one, nor yet rejecting the toleration and simplicity affected by the other. This parallel holds good in politics. Institutions founded on this moderate and temporising basis alone, can ensure the happiness of a nation, or stand the test of time and opinion.

Brynn Al'yn.

How thankful do I feel when the cares of the day are over, and I am allowed to retire betimes to my closet, and enjoy the liberty and comparative tranquillity which it affords. These are happy hours—doubly happy, from the circumstances in which I am placed. Few persons in the enjoyment of every earthly good, experience the real and genuine delight which affects me. Enjoyments which they can at any time command, lose, from that very circumstance, half their value, while with me constant deprivations render the few pleasures I do possess doubly dear.

Hark! how the rain beats against the windows: the wind too roars among the bending branches, and the waters of the lake are to be heard dashing against the rocks. My poor brother is, perhaps, at this moment tempest-tossed on some distant sea, or perhaps he is pacing the deck

at the midnight watch, thinking of home, and sighing over the vast distance which divides us—or—but, why should I conjure up unpleasant images, and suffer my feelings to attune themselves to the wild uproar without? Better days are in store.

How much additional anxiety has that heart, which is tenderly alive to the welfare of others! Our own sorrows we may generally bear up against; but when coupled with those of friend and connexions, the afflicted soul is hard pressed. Would that I were with my dear father at this moment! His gentle, yet firm spirit of endurance, resting upon the pure basis of fervent piety, would compose those agitated feelings, which, in spite of my efforts, still assail and disturb me. Yesterday we had accounts from my brother. They had encountered the enemy with an inferior force, and been dreadfully harassed for several days. The ship in which he serves had suffered severely. They were almost disabled for sea; much more for a renewal of the con-

test, which was hourly expected. His friend and patron, the captain, was killed, with many of his brave seamen, and he himself was slightly wounded, but obliged to stand to his duty as usual. Poor fellow! his bold and active spirit will now, I hope, support him—still, in spite of the Governor's affected merriment, and his rough arguments to the contrary, we fear the result.

Perhaps it were happy, considering the waywardness of human nature, could members of a large family steel their hearts somewhat against the dominion of affection, and learn to look with a degree of comparative apathy upon the fortunes of those so nearly allied. I confess I cannot. The dignity, the happiness, the welfare of the whole, ever seem to me dependent on each member of the family. The act of one appears the act of all; the rise or fall of one I consider fortunate or unfortunate to the whole: like a well-compacted fabric, while all its parts remain firm, steady, and united, it is beautiful and glorious to look upon; but should

one pillar give way it equally affects the strength and durability of the whole structure. How different an aspect would many families present, were they diligently brought up, and embued with this principle. Were they taught to consider themselves amenable not to themselves only (that is a truly selfish principle), but to their family likewise for their actions—and surely this is not unreasonable, inasmuch as our families are for the most part affected in some degree, often very deeply, by our errors or our successes.

But from all we read and all we hear, this generous principle prevails but little among mankind. The youth, anxious to be his own master, hurries forth into the world. He at once thinks himself superior to the stale maxims of his parents; he laughs at the warnings of affection—nay, he even fancies, that his good nature is called forth to endure them. Conscious that his own views are the best, he thinks he will break through narrow prejudices—he gives himself up to the do-

minion of selfishness and conceit, and too often finds, after he has given years of pain and anxiety to those who ought to have been nearest and dearest to him, that his youth has been spent in folly, and his years are destined to be embittered by disappointment and self-reproach.

It is not without cause that these reflections occupy my mind. Would you not think that a man like my father was exempt from trouble and affliction, on account of his children? Alas! it is not the case. Tenderly, piously, and carefully, as they have been brought up, they do not all answer his expectations—they even give him cause for painful anxiety. I do not wish to weary you with the relation of domestic grievances. There are few families whose cup is not embittered by them. The virtuous particularly are not exempt from these trials; and it has been not unfrequently observed, that the children of bad and violent parents have grown up to be the greatest comfort of those least deserving of them. “Hast

thou children," says the wise author of Ecclesiasticus, " instruct them, and bow down their neck from their youth." People, amiable in their own natures, are apt to forget this; they love their offspring, and, therefore, they have a pleasure in indulging them—a pardonable weakness, but one which has fatal effects on ungrateful minds.

I accompany my father to the village of Ladyston to-morrow, on business of no very pleasant nature. I will write again in this packet.

Rynan.

OUR journey yesterday was attended with little satisfaction. You will pity us when you hear the cause of it. Robert, we strongly suspect, has unfortunately become attached to a young woman, the daughter of one Parker, a man who subsists by plunder in the forest. My father, fully aware of my brother's obstinacy, and his invincible resolution in carrying any point, upon which his mind has once been fixed, determined to proceed cautiously in his enquiries, and, accordingly, without alarming my mother with the hints he had received, he rode to Brynn Allyn in the morning, and took me as his assistant, in the investigation of the matter. In order that no decisive measures on his part might stimulate Robert into the execution of some imprudent scheme, it ~~involved~~ that I should call at Parker's while my father rode on to the

Manor House, and communicated the affair to Mr. Tempest, who has great influence with the parties. Had I the inclination at present, I could amuse you with an account of our ride. It is the most romantic of any in the country. For several miles threading the mazes of the wildest hollows of the forest, you at length suddenly burst upon the vale, the estuary, and the village of Ladyston. The venerable manor-house, with its gabled ends, and raised terraces, and ancient grove, stands lord of the domain, sheltered on every side from the storm, yet still overlooking the whole.

It is now only a year and a half since the Tempests arrived here, and yet the improvements are great. Much superfluous timber has been cleared away, and the meadows and corn lands thrown more open to the genial influence of the sun. Many ruinous walls have been taken down, and thriving hedge rows substituted. The road has been improved, and many formal plantations on the sides of the hills been thinned and thrown open

to the forest. Nothing destroys the picturesque more than square, circular, or triangular patches of planting scattered over the country, and hemmed in with high walls of ill compacted stone. Mr. Tempest is a man of undoubted taste, and though, on his father's death, he found the whole estate in the wildest disorder, yet it did not arise from that unsparing prodigality, which leaves all naked and cheerless; but rather from that carelessness and want of interest, which the pursuits of ambition naturally create in the mind of the proprietor towards distant possessions. Accordingly, the task of the present owner has been rather the cutting away of obstructions, which time and neglect had produced, than the more difficult task of supplying that beauty, warmth, and shelter, which preceding rapacity had destroyed.

On reaching the out-skirts of the village, I dismounted, and, taking a path to the left, through a little wood, I reached the place of my destination, without

awakening the curiosity and enquiries of the villagers. Jane Parker was ascending the brow, carrying a large pitcher of water from the well, when I turned the corner of the cottage, and stood before the door. She did not appear surprised, nor yet alarmed, at my appearance. A beautiful blush, certainly, for a moment, glowed upon her countenance, but her manner was composed and graceful. She placed her burden upon the ground, and, advancing with a respectful air, opened the door, and begged me to be seated.

There is a something in this poor girl's manner peculiarly dignified and sedate; and I felt no little difficulty in determining how best I could execute my painful commission. To insult over poverty on the plea of superiority, is not, and I hope never will be, in my nature. I therefore at once gave up all idea of remonstrance, for it could only be on such grounds. After some conversation about herself and her pursuits, I gradually introduced the subject of her father—his employments—

his dexterity in his art, and his precarious means of subsistence, till at length I summoned courage to ask, if my brother was not frequently the companion of his excursions. She replied simply and unaffectedly, that he was—that he appeared very fond of all kinds of sport in the forest, and that her father was very glad to teach him any thing he knew. I then enquired whether he came often. She answered in the affirmative; and added, that he was always welcome there—he was so kind and seemed so happy.

Thus far had I got, but the candour and simplicity of her manner caused me to hesitate how to proceed. The thought, however, of returning to my father, without, in some measure, satisfying his anxiety, induced me to summon up resolution, and I accordingly drew my seat nearer to her's, and in as kindly a tone as I could use, I asked her if my brother had no other object in his visits than merely to accompany her father in his excursions. She raised her eyes to mine,

gazed steadily, yet still modestly at me, and replied gently, that she did not know of any. I now found it necessary to speak out, and told her, as delicately as I could, the nature of those reports, which had reached my father's ears, and enquired whether she could make us all happy by contradicting them.

The poor girl was now silent—tears filled her eyes, and her bosom, heaving rapidly, discovered her agitation. Taking her hand, I continued. “I see, Jane, I know that you have both good sense and good feeling. If I am candid and open in what I say to you, I know you will pardon me, and believe that this is a most painful task to me.” She here gently pressed my hand in both of her’s, and then withdrawing them rapidly, cast her eyes upon the ground. “ You know that my brother is a source of great anxiety to his father—his pursuits are so different from what we could all wish: if he was to form any imprudent connexion, it would be the cause of unhappiness to himself, and to every body connected

with him ; it would plunge us all into great affliction, and we should consider any person, who took advantage of his weakness to divide him from his family, as his and their worst enemy. I know, Jane, that it is only to hint these things to you, to make you enter into their full meaning."

A long and solemn pause ensued after these words. You may smile at the latter epithet, as used on such an occasion ; but really, though I had completed my appointed task, I did not feel my mind at ease.

By this time the beautiful cottager, for indeed she possesses more than ordinary charms, both of person and manner, recovered her self-possession. She rose, but not at all with the air of a culprit. " If you think, Miss Hastings," said she, in a tone of firm composure, " that we are people to take advantage of any person, you wrong both me and mine. I know all that you think, and all that you would say. Poor and mean as we seem, we were not brought up to deceive or be-

tray our betters. Neither you nor your family shall ever have reason to complain. Do not fear me. When I once know my duty, I will ask for strength to perform it."

I went away from this lowly abode, marvelling inwardly at all I had seen, and all I had heard. Oh! my friend, true nobility of soul does not confine itself to the palaces and mansions of the great. This is not the first time I have discovered it beneath the humble cottage roof, and when found there, how lovely—how striking does it appear! Yet in what an awkward dilemma are we all placed! Though if truth was ever personified, it beams forth in the open and impressive countenance of this humble cottager, yet we are all too well aware of the weakness of our nature not to doubt, whether the influence of ambition, and the strong suggestions of affection, may not break through all the barriers which principle may oppose to their progress. Yet I admire her frankness and generous nature; but more than all, do I feel disposed to

depend upon her rectitude of intention, from the concluding sentiment of our conversation. It is, indeed, by strength imparted to us, that we are alone enabled to do the least good. The inclinations of our hearts tend to evil continually.

Rynan.

THE ARCHDEACON TO MR. TEMPEST.

IT would argue in me an unworthy degree of insensibility, did I not both feel and express a proper proportion of gratitude for the very flattering contents of my friend's letter. Happy is it for himself and his parish, that your aged and afflicted pastor, has at length, full of years and infirmities, descended to the grave of his fathers. In some respects, he was not unworthy in his generation: let a veil, then, be hereafter thrown over his foibles. Those weaknesses which pass without censure in private life, often do infinite injury in a public capacity. In the former case, self only is in general the sufferer—in the latter, the community. With regard to your very liberal proposal, that I should nominate to the vacant living of Ladyston, I at once

answer, that I accept the favour with feelings of peculiar pleasure. You were formerly kind enough to say, that you should advise with me on this subject, whenever it came into discussion, and accordingly, I have of late reflected much upon it. You may conclude, then, that the step I am now taking, and the advice I am about to give, have been the result of no little consideration.

Where ignorant and presuming men are elevated by the indiscreet, I may term it, the criminal partiality of friends, into the very responsible office of spiritual head of a parish, the mischiefs both generally to the establishment, and individually to the members of the congregation, are incalculable. They are, alas! so frequently witnessed in every part of the country, that it is needless to detail them.

Patrons of livings have an awful duty to discharge. The salvation of thousands often depends upon their choice. They should always consider the ecclesiastical influence which they possess, as held im-

mediately of God himself, and entrusted to them to be used *solely* in his service. It is shocking that either family aggrandizement or party views, should ever induce them to promote the incapable or the unworthy. Every patron to an ecclesiastical benefice will have most assuredly to answer for his abuse of that important privilege, before the Great Judge of all.

Your parish, under its present circumstances, is not likely to be a sinecure to a man resolved to perform his duties: yet still, to bring it back into a healthful and desirable state, will require at least as much caution as zeal. It is by indirect influence rather than by open expostulation, that errors of the fanatical kind are best to be undermined. A calm and composed perseverance in the performance of every ordained duty—a conduct in public matters firm, decided, fearless, and consistent, never overbearing, yet strictly adhering to law and right; these are the points to be aimed at, and persisted in through good report and evil report, and they cannot fail in the end to

produce some effect on the spirits of those who do not wilfully and obstinately blind themselves to their duties.

Now the man I would select for the spiritual direction of Ladyston, must enter into all these views. He must be sober-minded, prudent ; toiling, not to please men but God, and therefore have his heart fortified against disgusts and disappointments. He must be strong in body, vigorous in mind, having a zeal indeed, but one governed by knowledge, and tempered with discretion ; and in moreover asserting, that the addition of worldly and local influence would materially assist his endeavours, I may be excused when the peculiar state of the district is duly weighed. All these points have come under my separate consideration. I have looked around—nay, I have advised with our venerable and excellent diocesan, and the result of all my enquiries, and all my meditations has been that you—yes ! that *you*, my friend, are the very person best qualified to undertake, and most likely, under

God's blessing, to accomplish all that we have so ardently wished and prayed for.

It would be unbecoming in me to urge the ministerial functions upon you. Such a determination, as that of enlisting under the banners of Christ, as a preacher of his gospel, should ever be the spontaneous suggestion of a man's own heart. Self-interest, ambition, the love of ease, worldly expediency, the love of display—all these are unworthy motives for embracing the pastoral office. The world with all its lusts, pomps, and vanities, should have no part or lot in the selection of a sacred employment, which looks solely to the life eternal; nor is he who impiously, out of a worldly spirit, assumes the sacred functions, a fit representative of those apostles and followers of our Lord, who took up the cross joyfully without any hope of a temporal reward; who bore disgrace, poverty, and persecution; who, in stripes and imprisonments, in journeys, in perils of waters, in shipwrecks, "in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fast-

ings often, in cold and nakedness," and finally, in death itself, proved their high-minded doctrine—that to live was Christ, and to die was gain—who, setting aside all temporal considerations, laboured without ceasing, to perform their heavenly Father's work, by forwarding the salvation of their fellow-creatures, esteeming the reproach of Christ "to be their greatest riches, and having a due respect unto the (eternal) recompence of the reward."

After this declaration, you will not expect any importunity from me, much as I have my scheme at heart. I well know the many scruples which a mind conscientious and highly gifted as yours, will create, at the first glance of my plan, though indeed, I have reason to suspect, that of late, the subject has not been entirely foreign to your own feelings. What I have said will, I well know, meet with your deep and solemn consideration, and I rest assured, that you will neither hastily reject, nor yet incautiously, and without proper self-examination, em-

brace my proposal. Under this conviction, I write the more openly.

There are certain people who think or pretend to think, that a superior and miraculous illumination of the Holy Ghost, accompanied with an inward and irresistible importunity of the Spirit to go forth and to teach, are pretensions necessary to be avowed by the candidate for the ministerial office. Persons who enter upon their functions upon such high grounds as these, are seldom useful to others, or comfortable to themselves. The visible influences of the Spirit are rarely, if ever experienced. In her infant state, the church required these extraordinary gifts, but they disappeared with the occasion which rendered them expedient. We are now all in an equal degree, if we strive equally to attain it, partakers of the benefits of that Spirit, whose silent and impartial manifestation "is given to every man to profit withal." In St. Paul's advice to Timothy concerning the church, and the qualifications requisite for the ministry, we find no

such lofty pretensions demanded as those before stated, nor do I remember any part of Scripture where it is even hinted, in reference to future times, that a positive “call,” immediate and almost instantaneous from God himself, would be the necessary passport for the admission of men into his ministry. That a man should earnestly *desire* this sacred office, that he should qualify himself for it by study and meditation—that he should “have a good report of them which are without,” that he be decorous in manner, sincere, temperate, not covetous,—holding “the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience;” these are the great requisites for the ministry of the church upon which the apostle insists, and which the sober judgment and general experience of mankind would pronounce far superior to the pretended revelations and blind impulses of false zeal and designing enthusiasm. By a “call,” I conceive nothing further to be understood, than a lively and earnest *desire* in the candidate for the priestly office, to serve God by

preaching salvation to his creatures, and an humble confidence, or rather hope, that by His grace aiding his own efforts, he shall be able to hold himself up as a wholesome example to believers “in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

The man who from proper motives takes up the ministry of the gospel, will not commence his important duty without deep thought and most earnest prayer. If the grace of God is necessary for any ordinary member of the church to perform his duty, much more is it necessary for him, who separated from the crowd, comes forward as the representative of the apostles to proclaim peace and salvation to his fellow-creatures, and to set an example to his flock, of those virtues which he has undertaken to inculcate. Considering the many human frailties which he has in common with his brethren, he will need particular vigilance over his whole life and conversation. It behoves him frequently and earnestly to appear before the throne of grace, to

ask for a bountiful supply of spiritual succours in aid of his infirmities.

The candidate for the ministry is in error, if he supposes, that the task which he is undertaking is light and easy;—that it merely consists in the performance of stated duties and enjoined forms. He must ever exhibit himself a christian *in spirit* :—his eyes are not to be rivetted on worldly aggrandisements—he has a more distant, but a far better crown in store. Neither is he to expect, whatever his talents and acquirements may be, that a flattering success will attend his efforts, however zealous. He must labour with sincerity of heart, according to the spirit and ordinances of the church, and leave all the rest to God, in whose hands alone it rests. “ Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but God giveth the increase.”

Having this principle ever in mind, the conscientious minister of the gospel looks not for the approbation of man. Though no perceptible good may immediately result from his efforts—nay, though disappointments are ever attending him,

and obstacles impeding his progress, he perseveres in sowing the seed of the word—in adhering to established ordinances, not given to novelties ; in showing in his own conduct, as far as the infirmities of nature, assisted by divine grace, will allow him, an exemplar of his precepts : and the success of his exertions he leaves entirely to that All-Ruling Power, whose servant he is, and under whom, and with whom he is an humble “fellow-labourer” in the great work of mercy and redemption. Certain I am, that these are the only principles which can support the zeal of the christian minister, and encourage him to a steady perseverance in his duties under the many disappointments, slights, and even malicious attempts to which he is ever liable, and which would otherwise too often overwhelm the mind with tedium and disgust.

I am aware that all these points, and many more, of almost equal importance, will suggest themselves to your own mind ; yet, in bringing them under your consideration, I perform a duty which is

necessary for the satisfaction of my own feelings. May the Almighty stimulate your enquiries and direct your decision ! Whatever that decision may be, I doubt not, it will be founded on the honest and conscientious dictates of an anxious and well-principled heart.

The Brynn.

YOUR kind letter filled me with a thousand varying emotions. How can you doubt my inclination to see you? Nay, why should you represent any thing as a sacrifice on my part, which, in the remotest degree, tends to bring about so desirable an event? Believe me, it is not necessary to rail at the dullness of my native vallies, at the silence of our forest walks, and the dignified sameness of our pursuits, nor yet to picture, in language so dismal, the numerous disadvantages attending what you are pleased to term, my “conventional seclusion,” in order to induce me to desert them for a while, when I have such a temptation before me as the personal enjoyment of your friendship and society. All your professions bear with me the stamp of sincerity, because I am not aware of any motive you can have, but real attach-

ment, to occupy so many of your valuable hours, in corresponding with and thinking of a friend so differently circumstanced from yourself—you, united to the man of your heart—enjoying, (because not abusing) wealth, title, consequence—I, secluded in a remote corner of the world—shut out, even from my own domestic circle, and doomed, I know not how long, to eat the bitter food of hopeless endurance. I draw this picture, not as the contrast which so much exists in my own mind, as in yours, when comparing our relative situations.

For my own part, I candidly own that the enjoyments of fashionable life, which you so warmly describe—I suspect rather with a view to raise my curiosity than to give your own unbiassed sentiments upon them—are not objects of allurement upon which my thoughts are apt to dwell. We foresters and mountaineers feel not the loss of luxuries, to which we have never been accustomed; and so satisfied

are we with the enjoyments and blessings, which we do possess, that we cannot imagine the necessity of creating artificial wants, in order to increase the store.

We ask no more than simple Nature gives,
We love our mountains, and enjoy our storms.

The natural cravings of man are few, and happy would it be, if he would still adhere to patriarchal simplicity, nor make the business of life to consist in a routine of sensual pursuits, and in surfeiting the senses to their utmost bounds with every mental and corporal luxury which art and ingenuity can devise.

Disapproving, however, as I do of town life, and unwilling, as I really am, to venture within its vortex, nevertheless, after all this moralizing, will you believe, that I am really in active preparation for joining your circle? The irresistible temptation of your society has broken down every other consideration, and I am actually leaving my beloved vales for the

smoke of the great city. How this was brought about, I will tell you. Between the governor and my aunt, you are well aware, that a kind of systematic warfare is carried on. In whatever is proposed for their consideration, the hearty disapprobation of one is the almost inevitable consequence of the approval of the other. This love of contradiction frequently throws me into most awkward situations. On the present occasion, after my own mind was made up, I first imparted your wishes to my aunt. She received them as I expected. The proposal argued ingratitude and restlessness in me—impertinence in you. I was charged to burn the letter, and mention the subject no more. Submission may be carried too far, where an unwarrantable tyranny usurps the place of a lawful influence and authority. Is not this a maxim in modern politics? A look, a smile, a word from my dear father and mother, have ever been sufficient with me, either for encouragement or admonition. I have endeavoured to pursue the same course

here, but it is impossible. With some minds a submissive spirit only provokes the more aggression. In the evening accordingly, I mentioned your letter to the governor, which was the signal for a redoubled attack on the part of my aunt. Her violence, however, produced the usual effect. With all the characteristic generosity of his profession, the governor never stands by neuter when his spouse sets common feeling at defiance, and endeavours, regardless of right or wrong, to give the law. An unpleasant altercation ensued; my aunt retired to her room, and the governor in the warmth of his heart declared that I should go when and where I pleased; and, more than that, he would take care that I appeared among his old friends in town in a style and situation worthy of one whom he had taken to his house, and adopted as his daughter. "

Though the result of this contest was gratifying to me, inasmuch as my prospect of seeing you now amounted almost

to certainty, yet you can scarcely conceive how disagreeable—how *very* disagreeable these domestic squabbles are. “ Better is a dinner of herbs, where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.” The full force of this sentiment I often feel, and if there is one wish more than another, the accomplishment of which I would pray for—it should be that in old age I may never so far suffer my passions and bad humours to get the better of my feelings—my temper and my humanity, as to make me irascible, querulous, and selfish—the terror of the young, and the avoidance of those who would otherwise cherish and alleviate my infirmities.

My father and mother spent yesterday with us, and are, I am happy to say, in good health and spirits. They not only promote my projected visit to you, by their unconditional approbation, but my father intends escorting me to the palace at L—, from whence I shall accompany the bishop and his amiable

family to their residence in London. I shall not linger there longer than politeness demands, but shall hasten, with feelings of unfeigned joy, to the residence of my dear friend.

The Brynn, July.

ONCE more have I regained my native vallies—once more do I hail with rapture my favourite haunts. In the stillness, in the verdure, in the picturesque beauty and the grandeur of the scenes, among which I am now enclosed, there is, compared to those which I have left, a magic influence, which, while it delights, sometimes almost bewilders me. O my friend! you did not err when you pronounced me an irreclaimable votary of rural life. I do, I ever must love nature. The perpetual rounds of gaiety, stripped of your presence, would lose in my eyes all their charms. It is your participation that tempts me into scenes, which, however they may dazzle in their novelty, are wearisome in their repetition. Six giddy months in the metropolis have taught me as much of life as I wish to know; and while I acknowledge with gratitude the

most lively, all your exertions to instruct me duly in the ways of what is emphatically called "the world," yet I must candidly own I should have had more solid pleasure in your society, amid humbler scenes, because I should have been allowed more of it, and under circumstances more exclusive and less distracting.

However in the casual intoxication of crowded gaieties, my imagination may have been overpowered and dazzled, and my feelings momentarily excited, yet these things bear not the scrutiny of my cooler judgment. I feel their emptiness. If *my* rural prepossessions are too strong, may I not justly charge upon you, that your prejudices against retired life are too strong also? To live wholly at the Brynn, or at Rynan, I know you would pronounce little better than to be—

In shady cloister mewed,
Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.

Glad I am, however, that you are soon to have an opportunity of judging of our mode of life; and I am convinced, that, as your candor will induce you to judge fairly, so your good sense will compel you to give our pursuits the preference. A life of mere mode and fashion may be suited to the frivolity of uncurbed youth, and accord with the trifling of an imbecile spirit; but to a thinking mind it is revolting, to a religious one appalling. Yet I am willing to allow, that fashionable life has its charms, else why so many votaries? Habit, ambition, self-love, listlessness—these are the powerful stimulants, which urge thousands to waste their time and talents in what avails them nothing—in what gives them little present satisfaction, and what will never bear reflection, at a time when reflection will intrude. Welcome, then, my retirement—welcome these secluded vales—this wild and trackless forest. Welcome, ye homely scenes of rural life—the sweets and hardships of my

earlier days. I return to you constant and attached as ever—yes! well convinced that my sentiments will never change.

Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods
More free from peril than the ~~envious~~ court?

Pardon me, my friend; but I really feel what I express; and you know my affection for you too well not to excuse these apparently ungrateful transports. Believe me, one great cause of my joy and exultation, is the prospect of soon having you and your's amongst us—of seeing you, for half the year at least, gladdening the hearts of the numerous tenantry by your presence, and stimulating them by your example—of finding you placed in a situation where your many virtues will be called forth into action; where, if the charms of your genius and accomplishments be partially obscured, the goodness of your heart, and the excellence of your principles, will be displayed to the admiration and certain

benefit of hundreds of your fellow creatures. It is this thought which animates me. Your presence will, indeed, gladden these mountain scenes, and to my heart will communicate a beam of warmth, which, though I cannot express, I would you could feel.

We made a party yesterday to your future residence. My father, during my late stay at Rynan, was very busy in the performance of his promise concerning the house. You know his excellent taste for architecture. Assisted by Mr. Tempest, he has already determined upon the exterior alterations, a plan of which I am directed to forward with this, and I think they will quite equal your expectations. According to your request, assisted by my mother and sisters, I have undertaken to direct the interior arrangements; and as I am well acquainted with your husband's habits and your own, I shall be much disappointed if you do not find every thing as convenient, as warm, and as cheerful as you could desire. ~~Liveli-~~ ^{and} the great recommendation of

“ the Lodge.” It is inferior to Rynan in beauty, to Ladyston in variety, and to the Brynn in gloomy grandeur—yet it will suit your cheerful habits best of all. Besides, for the conveniences of life it is better situated than any, and to you, who know not what deprivation is, this is most desirable.

Mr. Tempest was an inmate at Rynan during my stay there, and he spends a few days here next week. My suspicions as to the object of his journey to town are realized, to the complete demolition of that castle in the air, with which you were pleased to amuse yourself at my expense. He has at length taken orders, and my father holds the living of Ladyston for him, till he can be inducted. This is a great point gained. My father’s only fear is, that his family influence, which is still extensive, backed by his great attainments, will cause him to leave us for more valuable preferments. This, however, he denies—energetically adding, that his wishes extend not beyond the vallies, the mountains, and the lakes of our

secluded district. Remember this—for Mr. Tempest came amongst us even more violently prejudiced than you are. He would indeed be a great loss, for, both with rich and poor, he is deservedly a great favourite. At Rynan, and at the Brynn, he is always at home; and I am not hasty in anticipating that the inmates of the lodge will find him a great acquisition. There is much sober sentiment, both in his manner and his conversation, which added to a cheerful and prepossessing exterior, render him a pleasing companion. My father and mother are both particularly attached to him, and, wonderful to say, on this one point, viz. his merits—the governor and my aunt venture to agree. I could say much on this subject, but am desirous, by my silence, to make you atone in some measure for your former inquisitiveness, I had almost said, impertinence. I can scarcely say that I am settled yet—I am so responsible a personage at both houses, that there is much to settle before I fall into my old habits again. You know,

I was never before either so far, or so long absent from "the Vallies," as during my visit with you. You alone could withdraw me from my loved seclusion. Adieu,

Ladyston.

EACH day as it passes brings fresh returns of happiness. Thus not unfrequently do apparent evils educe certain good. Instances are not needed to vindicate the ways of God to man. That every accident—every circumstance of life the most trifling—is but a part of one grand scheme, ever working to a good end, is an invigorating, a delightful doctrine. I thought it the greatest of evils to be so suddenly withdrawn from the world—from its pleasures—its ambition. It has been the means, however, of opening new, and purer, and more lasting springs of happiness. Now, I feel not merely resigned to my lot—I would not exchange it for all my former advantages.

It has not been unaptly said, that the happiness of the Christian commences even in this world, and that the term sal-

vation, as a boon bestowed upon man, may be with propriety applied, not as confined to hereafter only—but even to our sojourning upon earth. Certain it is that the mild influences of religion upon the heart constitute a new creature, and as philosophy illuminates the understanding, opens the eyes and ears to a thousand new and delightful sensations, and reveals numberless sources of delight, to which the senses were before indifferent; so does Christianity, by refining the affections, by pointing the hopes heavenward, by elevating the mind, and adding force to its operations through the sublime doctrines of the gospel—produce as it were a new man, renovate the soul, and sift the grosser particles of our nature. Man is naturally a sensual being. His tastes, his inclinations, are grovelling---his mind is dark, superstitious, and under the influence of bad passions. Awaken his imagination by the wonders of art—strengthen his reason by the rules of science—curb his extravagance by the refinements of taste, and he becomes

humanized—the diamond loses its roughness—is filed into shape—but the brilliancy is still wanting. This alone can be communicated by the strong incentives—the prospective views of religion. Philosophy and a refined taste may lay down a consistent code of morals, and may even see the expediency of adhering to it—but Christianity alone can produce *motives*, which, upon serious and enlightened minds, enforce the *practice*. The influence of the Christian religion upon the heart—its perfect adaptation to the happiness, equally of the individual and the community, are to me sufficient evidences of its divine authority. The man who enters heartily into its spirit—who makes it his delight to conform to its precepts, who makes it a solemn duty to watch the wayward impulses of his soul, and apply to them the overpowering stimulants and sublime incentives of the gospel, that man finds day by day the advantages of his choice: this world, emphatically termed a vale of tears, for such indeed it is to the majority of mankind,

becomes cheered and enlightened—its glooms are dispersed—he is extricated from its entanglements: viewing it as no abiding city, those temporal matters that afflict others, affect him but little; in short, his salvation is already nigh, if not present; he feels, he acknowledges its influence.

Where worldly ambition directs the aspirings of the soul, there can be little or none of this heavenly-mindedness.

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And contentment, obedience, and a perfect resignation to the will of God, form the basis of all Christian virtue. He whose mind is ever occupied in looking forward to the possession of that which he hath not, can scarcely be said to use or appreciate properly that which he hath. As in the eyes of God humble usefulness is as acceptable as that which is more exalted—so he who works solely to please God is indifferent in what sphere his lot

is cast. In a few years all distinctions are levelled, and it is the heart, not the decorations of outward pomp, that will be placed in the balance. So that he can serve God and benefit his fellow creatures, the Christian is content. Earthly grandeur truly is acceptable to the weakness of human nature, should it be conferred, but it is not to be an object of Christian warfare. Many wise and good men have shunned it—they sought heavenly dignities, not earthly. The latter too often lead to the loss of the former. The greater the elevation, the greater the responsibility, and the more dangerous the temptation. The more we can withdraw our minds from being influenced by worldly views, and the more regular and undisturbed our occupations, the more nearly shall we be enabled to approach to that thorough and blessed change, which we have described Christianity as making in the inward man. A life of tranquillity is equally delightful and desirable to the Christian. It enables him to improve, to enlarge, to confirm

his views—it allows him a freer converse with his own heart, and larger opportunities of making advances towards that Christian perfection, which should ever be the object of his pursuit, though its complete attainment he can never expect.

It is from considerations of this nature that I daily feel more and more, not merely reconciled, but even delighted with Ladyston. The various duties of my profession give it a new and absorbing interest, which before it partly wanted—all its native beauties, its natural claims upon my attention, come in aid of these, and, looking upon it now as my settled home, till it pleases God to call me to another, and I humbly hope, a better, it would grieve me should the mistaken zeal of friends tempt me, under the plea of higher duties, and more dignified offices, to abandon these scenes of my first real woe, and first real happiness.

The Brynn.

WITH feelings still agitated by an event which has occurred, I resume our correspondence. You remember being so much interested in an account I sent you of the Verderer's daughter. My worst fears are realized; but two nights have past since she left the country under the protection of my unfortunate, rash, and ill-advised brother. Poor Robert! I pity more than I blame him. It requires great strength, both of mind and principle, to stem the torrent of deep-rooted passion. Had my father's plan been adopted by all the family in this matter, most probably this act of disobedience and imprudence would not have occurred. But my aunt, who in the fancied plenitude of her wisdom, interferes in almost every thing, upset, by her very summary mode of proceeding, the careful management of months. But I will give

you an outline of what has past.—The second night of my arrival here, I was sitting in my little boudoir, which I have often described to you. It opens by a casement window upon the grounds, and is often my favourite retreat for a few hours in the evening, when the family have retired, which is generally very early. It is the more convenient for this, because it is connected with my sleeping room, by a small flight of stairs. I seldom take the precaution to close the heavy panelled shutters—for it is not often, that strangers pierce the recesses of Brynn-Allyn, and as for the neighbouring mountaineers, they show no disposition for intrusion.

I was sitting at the table, and in the very act of arranging some letters which I intended to preserve (the greater part were from you), when my notice was attracted by a noise from without. I turned hastily towards the window, when imagine my surprise and alarm, in perceiving a female figure standing close to it, beckoning for admission. The rain was

falling in torrents, and the wind drove it fearfully against the panes. Recovering in some measure from my agitation, and knowing that in a moment I could alarm the house was it necessary, I advanced a candle towards the window, and to my no small surprise, saw the beautiful face of my poor friend, the Verderer's daughter. Hesitating no longer, I gently admitted her. She was pale, thin, and agitated, and her clothes wet from the effects of the pitiless storm. I begged her to be seated, threw some wood upon my little fire, and enquired anxiously what it was in my power to do for her. "Some accident has befallen you," said I, observing her altered looks, "let me go and acquaint Lady Allyn that you are here, and you shall go to bed immediately, and I will take care of you myself." The poor girl burst into tears, and was for some time unable to answer me. At length she raised her eyes, and looking fearfully round, as if afraid that some one was near, she told me, in a low voice, that she could not stay

more than a few minutes—that she had waited till her father was gone into the forest, in order to speak to me about a certain business which ought to have concerned herself only. I enquired what it was. “ You remember I told you,” said she, earnestly, “ when you spoke so kindly about Mr. Robert Hastings, that you might have confidence in me, and suffer your mind to be at ease as far as I was concerned?” I assented, and said that we had all hitherto to thank her for her obedience to our wishes. She sighed deeply. “ Do not thank me too soon,” she rejoined. “ I come here purposely to tell you, that I am now free to act as I please. My mind being now made up, I could not rest till I had honestly told you so. Whatever happens now, I shall not have to blame myself for any deceit.”

I was astonished and thunder-struck at this declaration. I knew it portended something, and I felt the extreme awkwardness of my situation. “ What can have caused this change in your senti-

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the conversation afterwards, nor appeared particularly interested in it. I augured well from this—but how vain my hopes were, a few mornings after proved. Mr. Tempest arrived at the Brynn in great trouble—the Verderer had missed his daughter, and Robert was no where to be found.

Such is the progress and termination of this romantic history. What can now be done, I am at a loss to conceive. After an ineffectual pursuit set on foot by the Governor, contrary to the opinion of Mr. Tempest, who thinks that there is now no remedy—the latter set off for L—, where my father is at present on a visit to the Bishop. The shock and the disappointment will, I am sure, be very great, but it will be opened to him by one, who displays in all his actions, both feeling and judgment. No one can be more devoid of pride than my father. Unequal matches he does indeed most strongly object to, because he conceives that they are very rarely happy ones.

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It is from considerations of this nature that I daily feel more and more, not merely reconciled, but even delighted with Ladyston. The various duties of my profession give it a new and absorbing interest, which before it partly wanted—all its native beauties, its natural claims upon my attention, come in aid of these, and, looking upon it now as my settled home, till it pleases God to call me to another, and I humbly hope, a better, it would grieve me should the mistaken zeal of friends tempt me, under the plea of higher duties, and more dignified offices, to abandon these scenes of my first real woe, and first real happiness.

From the Palace at L——.

MR. TEMPEST TO MISS MARY HASTINGS.

I AM deputed by your excellent father to write to you. He apologizes much for the trouble he gives me in this— scarcely aware, perhaps, that to me there is no pleasure at the present moment, so great as the performance of any thing which will in the smallest degree either communicate relief to him, or give satisfaction to you. Thank heaven, my dear and venerable friend is better. Your mother and sister, as likewise every member of the family here, have been indefatigable in their exertions and attentions. The Archdeacon indeed has not a wish unfulfilled, except that he sometimes desires to hear your gentle step, and see your anxious form flitting around his bed. You are wrong in supposing, that your brother's imprudence has had a material

effect in bringing on this severe attack. Your father deeply felt his disobedience, and no doubt, it cost him many bitter moments of disappointment and anxiety. But he is too sincere a christian to be long the victim of gloom and despondency —the act committed, the Archdeacon's mind was most busily employed in discovering the best remedies against the consequences of it. And it is particularly on this subject, knowing the great interest you ever take in all that concerns every individual of your family, that I am deputed to send you information.

A few days after your brother's flight, you are aware that a letter was received from him, entreating his father's pardon, and stating in plain and simple terms the motives of his conduct. I am bound in candour to confess, that they do no dishonour to his heart. The imprudence of Lady Allyn, unfortunately urged him to a step, which, without her interference, might never have taken place. At the Archdeacon's request, I hurried down to the sea-coast, where the culprits had re-

tired, no doubt with the intention of leaving the country by the first opportunity. They were married, and I found them sojourning in the lowly, but neat habitation of a fisherman with whom they had agreed for a few weeks' accommodation. They both seemed glad to see me, after I had greeted them as kindly as I could. Of what avail indeed is severity now? They did not meet me as culprits. With all her natural modesty of demeanour, Jane still retained her dignity. Of you she spoke in terms of grateful affection, which I will not venture to repeat—of the Governor and his Lady, she said little—but that little conveyed clearly the extent of her feelings. You will find, however, that the former has abundantly proved his sincere repentance for the part he was influenced to act. I say influenced, because he has too generous a heart, notwithstanding all his blustering and all his threatening, to oppress the poor and unprotected, unless some false bias is given to his prejudices.

Aware as you must be of Robert's disposition, you will not suppose that my visit to the young couple was one of anger and displeasure. Your father knew but too well the inutility of such a course. The poor girl he could not blame—she was attached to her lover, and acted almost in self-defence. Her virtuous forbearance had not been appreciated—nay, it had exposed her to persecution and ruin—her character was defamed, her friends were withdrawn, if indeed she had any, and her means of subsistence taken away; what more natural then, than to fly to the bosom of the only being who came forward at such a moment to shield and protect her? Perhaps you may say, that it was natural—but under circumstances improper,—that where common sense and the laws of society declare an action to be selfish and inexpedient, that the strong dictates of religious principle ought to interfere, and in the face of every circumstance whatsoever, to prevent its performance. Be it so; I would the practice of the world

could be measured in cases of equal delicacy by so exalted a standard. Where strong and virtuous feelings, which sometimes happens, hurry a man into an action which is a little wide of the cold and inflexible rules of the moral scale, the mere man of the world may cavil and condemn if he pleases, but the christian will the rather forgive, feeling the infirmities of his own nature, and knowing well the very large allowances which must be made for them by a greater judge than man.

I stayed a few days near the young couple. Your brother seems to have lost a portion of his natural indifference. I was happy to observe the very high opinion which he entertains of his beautiful partner, because, judging from his constancy of determination, and her great good sense, which is far above her years and her station, the most desirable results may flow from it. I was not displeased likewise by hearing him several times, in the most feeling way, lament the affliction which he had caused to his family,

more particularly his father, and express his resolution to make up for it now, as far as was in his power, by adopting any plan which may be deemed most prudent for himself, or most agreeable to the family at large.

With regard to the Verderer himself, you will be pleased to hear that the Governor has proposed to rebuild his cottage, and allow him a sum, which will more than cover his recent losses. We, I mean the Governor, your father, and myself, have likewise agreed upon the maintenance of the forest rights. Our respective parts are to be properly protected; and in the course of some years, this large and romantic tract will begin to reassume a portion of its ancient importance. I have agreed to nominate Parker as my deputy ranger, the profits of which office will not be inconsiderable. Under him are to be three verderers and a woodward, and he is to have the benefit of the various contracts concerning the new enclosures, fences, &c. The ultimate destination of the run-aways is not yet re-

solved upon, but the Governor writes word, that whatever plan is hit upon for the establishment of his nephew, he shall make a point of forwarding it. He appears to be one of those generous natures who rush headlong into mischief, and then when conscious of their error, set no bounds to their efforts at a reparation. In spite of all his foibles, one cannot help loving him. Generosity, frankness, and a forgiving temper, cover a multitude of other faults. However reason may condemn the latter, yet still the heart ever accompanies the former.

Adieu, till I see you all at the Brynn—which, tell the Governor, will be in a few days, should our patient continue to amend.

Ladyston.

As yet, I have not made any very decided progress in my various designs for the improvement of my parish. I find, what I imagine all men have found before me, that it is easier to plan than to execute, and that while fancy speeds along with almost incredible rapidity, reality crawls after at a very moderate pace indeed. It is strange enough that whilst I have been forming a thousand plans for bringing over my puritanical parishioners to my opinions, they have been equally sedulous in contriving means to bring me over to their's. They have sketched out a system of faith and government, if it may be so called, which one of their body was deputed yesterday to present and recommend. Few things are more annoying than to be exposed to the headlong presumption of fanatical men. Anxious to become acquainted

with their precise views, however, I patiently listened to a tedious, unconnected, and not very humble exposition of the paper they had drawn up, and at length I was convinced of that which I have always suspected, that their doctrine is founded in a total ignorance of the real import of Scripture, and their ideas of church government and social restraint in self-will and stubbornness of heart. And yet an almost invincible obstinacy is the frequent accompaniment of ignorance, and it is the sad experience of this that casts the deepest gloom upon my prospects. I comfort myself, however, in the reflection, that if I sow the seed and the soil receive it not, the fault rests not with me. “Who is Paul, and who is Apollos? Neither he that planteth is any thing, neither he that watereth, but God giveth the increase.” The church is “God’s husbandry”—its fabric is “God’s building.”

Startled as I was at the obstinacy of opinion which this novel attempt of teaching their pastor so plainly mani-

fested, I made a point of exhibiting no signs of the impatience which I really felt. To combat with zealots of this description, I knew was what they most ardently desired—to raise them into any degree of fancied importance, was what I was determined strictly to avoid. It is by the undue weight and consideration attached to them on their first appearance, that extravagant opinions of various kinds have attracted votaries, and risen into consequence against all the rules of common sense. Once inflame the passions of the multitude by opposition and contumely, and the voice of reason is drowned in the howlings of intemperate and causeless zeal. Thus the persecutions of Henry VIII. and the numberless prohibitory laws of his immediate successors, however expedient at the moment, were followed by the results which wise men foresaw. The people would not be *compelled* to think rightly. Because their consent was enforced to one creed and to one set of observances, each man, from the natural

opposition of his nature, took upon him to form a system for himself, till sects, religious and political, followed so close upon each other, that succeeding ages can scarcely find names for them all. Thus a celebrated author of those days writes—

What politics, or strange opinions,
That are not in our own dominions ?
What science can be brought from thence,
In which we do not here commence ?
What revelations, or religions,
That are not in our native regions * ?

HUDIBRAS. Canto 3d.

The more I see of mankind, in a religious point of view—the more I dive into his motives, and consider those secret springs of action, which almost equally influence all, the more do I feel the necessity—the more sensible I am of the delights—the more zealous am I in the cause of *uni-*

* The puritans of Charles the First's time were divided into upwards of fifty sects, each claiming for itself the merit of being the only true church, and some of them held opinions, and gave into practices of the most blasphemous and revolting kind. No wonder that the nation hailed with joy the re-establishment of the ancient rites and ordinances.

formity of public faith and worship. To be all “ of one heart and one mind”—for a whole nation, and every individual of it to have the same creed—the same public observances, to meet together in the same established places of worship, and with one heart and one voice—“ in unity of the spirit and the bond of peace,” this is a picture which every true Christian, every lover of his country and of mankind loves to draw; and but for the hardness of men’s hearts, it would long ago have been so. In proportion as unity and Christian love add strength to the Christian cause—so do schisms, divisions, and heresies, detract from it. Well may the unconverted heathen boast—*we* have but one mode of faith for each nation: and, lo, do ye come to persuade us of our errors, when even those of you who speak the same tongue cannot agree among yourselves?” The Atheist—the Deist—the Socinian—all those, who, from the naughtiness of their own hearts, or the pride of their own reason, love to deprecate and expose our holy religion to the disbelief

and contempt of the world—make use of this very potent argument against it. “What can your scriptures,” say they, “be to us, since we perceive that you are yourselves disagreeing concerning the doctrines they contain; and instead of producing that unity, that concord, and that godly love, which you say is their purport, you exhibit examples of strife—of enmity—of envyings and emulations, such as no other sect before or since has ever produced.” Well does the great Bacon remark, “schism in the spiritual body of the church, is a greater scandal than corruption in manners; as in the natural body, a wound, or solution of continuity, is worse than a corrupt humour.”

In perusing the history of the reformation of our church, and pursuing it up even to the present time, it cannot but strike the man of cool observation and unbiassed feeling, that the demands of the non-conformists were, for the most part, weak, frivolous, and unworthy. It behoved that man to have a high opinion

of his own judgment—yea, of his inward worth and holiness, who would venture to resist authorities—to withdraw himself from the communion of his fellow creatures, and disown the sacred functions of God's appointed ministers, merely because his eyes were offended with the sight of the priestly raiment, and his conscience alarmed when he saw those who were receiving the elements of bread and wine, kneeling in humble adoration before the throne of grace—kneeling to petition for the benefits of Christ's passion—that their bodies might be “made clean by his body, and their souls washed through his most precious blood.” The schismatics of the great revolution did, indeed, carry their opposition to the church to extraordinary lengths. “Omitting the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith,” they made war against weathercocks and steeples—against the surplice and the tippet. The sublime and scriptural liturgy of the church was trampled under foot, to make way for conceits and blasphemies—for

long preachings, and for public and private ecstasies. Uniformity of worship was despised ; every man became a prophet to himself ; sect rose up after sect ; each of these had likewise its ramifications and subdivisions, till at length, the nation, ashamed of its folly—harassed and tyrannized over, by that very licentiousness which it had nourished and maintained by its best blood—returned to the old observances—gladly rallied round the insulted altar of their fathers, and hailed with joy unfeigned that peace of mind—that solidity of doctrine—that decency and order, which are alone to be found under the sheltering wing of a strictly scriptural establishment. *And such is ours.* It is ignorance only that can disallow it. Its worth has been sealed with the blood of many learned and zealous Christians. It has stood the attacks of fanaticism, of time, of that natural love of change, which is ever actuating mankind ; but more than all, it has stood the neglect and perfidy of many of those sheltered within its bosom ; and it still stands

triumphant, notwithstanding that it is assailed on all sides by enemies, open and concealed.

When I consider the uninterrupted succession of the ministry, from the times of the apostles—the powers delegated to them; and which they have exercised for ages—when I consider too how the various schisms, which at various times weakened and divided the apostolic church, like falling stars in the heavens, blazed and disappeared—when I see the very corruptions foretold under the name of antichrist, purged and disallowed in these kingdoms, and the church of Christ existing still in her primitive form—when I read in holy writ the numberless exhortations to unity in faith and worship and woe denounced to those who imitate the crime of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram—when the solemn admonition sounds in my ears, “it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh,”—when, finally, I consider the injury which those do to the common cause of Christianity, who de-

sert the established worship of their brethren—and how very trifling are the reasons, which, in most cases, tempt them to the fostering of these divisions—I confess that it would be with fear and trembling that I ventured out of the pale of the apostolic church. I should experience many misgivings—my soul would be harassed with many doubts, and, at times, my conscience would press home upon me these questions—Art thou sufficient of thyself to set aside the articles of faith—to neglect the observances, and despise the establishments of thy country?* Canst thou set up thine own wis-

* There are some excellent remarks on this point to be met with in Dr. Waterland's admirable work on the Sacrament. "The judgment of ten thousand interpreters will always be of considerable weight against the judgment of some few, who are but interpreters at best, and as fallible as any other. And it must argue great conceitedness and self-sufficiency for a man to expect to be heard, or attended to, as a scripturist, or a textuary, in opposition to the Christian world, unless he first fairly considers and confutes what the *ablest* writers have pleaded for the received construction, and next as fairly proves and enforces his own. That there is very great weight and force in the united voice of the Christian

dom against the wisdom of ages, and the belief of the great majority of thy thinking brethren?" "Art thou not "proud, doating about questions and strifes of words?" And dost thou not risk thine eternal salvation by following the dictates of thine own presumption and conceit? "I am the vine," says our Lord, "ye are the branches." "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me*."

world, is a point not to be denied by any: and indeed those who affect to set up *new* notions, are themselves aware of it. Therefore it is of great moment to know and consider, what *others* have thought before us, and what the *common reason* of mankind approves: and the more numerous, or the more considerable the persons were, or are, who stand against us in any article, the less reason generally have we to be confident of *our own private persuasions*.—See also *Pearson on the Creed, Article the 9th.*

* St. John xv. 4, 5.

I AM not sorry that a little spirit of religious discussion has been excited amongst my mountaineers, by the deputation which they sent to me, and by the friendly visits which it has been my frequent practice of, late to make among them. The truth does not fear the light. And as fanaticism and enthusiasm are in general engendered by ignorance and a false perception of things—so, a fair and open canvassing of the articles of our belief, and the grounds upon which they rest, cannot but be productive of good. However liable mankind, and our own countrymen in particular, are, to be led away by temporary heat, and fever of the imagination—yet sober good sense, and moderate and correct views, will ever retain their power over some, and, in the end, if no causes arise to set in motion the constitutional obstinacy of our nature,

they will regain their influence over the general body.

I begin to find that this is already the case. An attachment and veneration to that cause, for the maintenance of which their forefathers had endured much, is the prevalent feeling among the majority—fewer than I imagined are actuated by principles of their own creation. Some oppose the Establishment because they have been brought up to consider it meritorious to do so—some do not like, from mere indolence, to forsake the things to which they have been accustomed—others are willing listeners to what I propose, providing it is not too much pressed upon them, and at unseasonable times, and is delivered in a lively, friendly manner; while, on the contrary, there are some stubborn spirits, who, living on the almost inaccessible fastnesses of the coast, far from any inland communication, will admit of no compromise—are impatient of any interference, and who have hitherto supplied the most zealous supporters of their self-constituted society. A love

of authority, and all importance of even trouble," "distinguish what are called the gifted men among them." I have little doubt, however, but that, "intimately, by patient forbearance, and well-aimed expostulation," the "Mother church at Lanty's Down, and its dependent chapels, will be tolerably well attended. Where no violence, and no intention of proscription, is manifested, the generosity of the British heart soon resumes its sway—the dictates of reason and expediency then begin to operate, and things wear in time an even and a rational aspect.

"It is curious to hear their mode of argument. From false premises they draw the most absolute conclusions; and there is sometimes a plausibility in what they advance, which, though soon destroyed by minds better informed, yet leaves one in no surprise at their obstinate error. One of their favourite arguments is, that the episcopal church has no right to interfere with the religious

These are too often the only real causes of non-compliance.

imposes articles of faith, and ordains ceremonies, which are no where mentioned in scripture, and which have not the authority of Christ.

That the apostles, and first ministers of the gospel, and their successors to the present time, have the privilege, by councils, and convocations, of enacting such observances, and dictating such creeds, being either according to the letter of scripture, or not adverse to its spirit, as they deem profitable for instruction and advancement in righteousness, or for the maintenance of that "decency and order" which is so strongly recommended, is not only prayed by the authority on these points, which the apostles themselves exercised, but by the analogy which exists between secular, and ecclesiastical government. The visible church of Christ could no more exist, so as to be what he intended it to be, a blessing to the nations of the earth, were it without established ordinances, and authorized articles of belief, than a kingdom could remain at unity in itself, or the rights of

of authority, has declared, supposing trouble, ~~and~~ of justice, its law gifted men ~~and~~, its government by doubt, how, or citizens, and suffered to be ~~parties~~, every man being a law ~~explore~~. "Brethren, stand fast," says ~~Law~~, "and hold the traditions (ordinances) which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle*." Here the great apostle declares, that Christians are bound to submit to other regulations than those merely which have been handed down to us by the evangelists, in the express words of our Lord; and in this he, no doubt, grounded his opinion, and established his practice, upon that power which was distinctly given to himself, and the other apostles—"Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven†." In another part, likewise, of his epistles, St. Paul says, "I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep

* 2 Thess. ii. 15.

† St. Matt. xviii. 18.

ordinances, as I delivered them to you. With what reason, then, can a man say that the church, and the ministers, and the bishops thereto, being in direct succession the representatives of the apostles, and the depositaries of their powers, have no authority to govern the church by establishing, or confirming, or upholding ordinances and articles of faith? Such ground is untenable. The apostle's creed remains to this day a splendid proof of the authority of the church in these matters.

Again, these non-conformists maintain, "that in all matters of religion they have a right to think and choose for themselves—that by nature every man is the absolute master of his own actions, and his own opinions. If so, Christ is dead in vain; the apostles preached in vain; and the church is a useless, unprofitable invention. But man is not his own; he is God's; nor has he any right, through the perverseness of his own wicked conceits, to cast away that soul,

which came from God, and is expected to return to him, (like the talents in the parable,) improved and augmented in spiritual graces. Whatever his pride, and the innate foolishness of his heart may desire, it mattereth not—he is not free to obey the corruptions of his nature—salvation is set before him as his object, and by a merciful revelation the course is marked out, which can alone lead to its attainment. It is these bold and liberal thinkers that St. Jude so aptly describes in his epistle,—“Clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots. Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; *wandering stars*, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.”

But one of their most triumphant objections is, that the people, haying a right to choose their own ministers, the church will not allow them to do so, but assumes the sole power to itself. Here they arrogate to themselves a right which they

led. Who chose the apostles, by whom were the saints ordained? Certainly Christ ordained ministers in the church—those ministers sent by Him to ordain others, in *uninterrupted succession*, has privilege been continued to the priesthood, still necessarily confined, as it was in the beginning, to the ministers of the apostolic church. They receive from the apostles, the apostles from Christ himself. Were it not so, there would be no real distinction between the clergy and the laity. Yet the former can perform those offices which the latter cannot, and this is an authority which can only proceed from an uninterrupted succession of men from Christ, empowered to qualify others. The ministers of Christ," says a learned divine, "are as much positive ordinances as the sacraments: and we might as well think, that sacraments not instituted by him, might be means of grace, as those pass for his ministers, who

which came from God, by return to him (like parable,) impeded by limited authority, in spiritual graces, to confer that the innate soul acquired. Yet some desire it now. this authority has come to obey the corruptions and darkness vation is. Be it so. The sacraments by a creed of the apostles have passed through the same channel, and although they have not lost their validity, because the Lord's prayer was abused to superstition, are we to relinquish its use, & doubt its excellence? It is even so with the priesthood. Our established church is no schism—it is but a renewal of the ancient and primitive church, established in this country before the landing of Augustine and his monks. At the reformation our forefathers did not pretend to set up a *new* religion—they only purified the *existing faith* of its abuses, and restored it to its pristine vigour—simplicity and holiness.

* See Mr. Law's 1st Letter to Bishop Headley.

Before we come to enquire deeply into these very important and interesting subjects, our minds are, naturally, enough, startled at the idea of that high and exclusive authority, which our church asserts, and which it should ever most zealously and scrupulously maintain. Restraint, of any kind, whether it be spiritual or political, is unwelcome to the natural licentiousness of the human heart. A thorough conviction of the truths and hopes of the gospel can alone bring us into submission to the decrees of the former, while habit, necessity, or an unwilling assent to its expediency, induce an acquiescence with the latter. There are numbers who never take the trouble to direct their enquiries to these subjects, who, because they are totally and wilfully ignorant of the foundations upon which ecclesiastical polity rests, profess to despise the system altogether—who venture to make their ignorance its own justification—who think it to be a fine thing boldly and arrogantly to arraign what they do not conceive it worth their while

to understand—whose fool-hardiness is a terror to the better informed and better disposed; possessing, however, the cowardly plea, that they are little aware of the danger which they are incurring. They, agree with, the description of St. Paul—“Men, consenting not to, whole, some, words; proud, knowing nothing; men, of, corrupt, minds, destitute, of, the, truth.” With regard to these, he further, gives advice—“From, such, withdraw, thyself.”

I HAVE been a week at the Brynn. Perhaps I may count it as one of the happiest periods in my life, inasmuch as it has given me an insight into that high degree of excellence, to which it is in the power of fallen humanity to attain. There are few persons within the whole compass of my experience, whose christian principles, as far as they influence the temper and the judgment, are more frequently called into play, than those of my friend, Mary Hastings. During my visit at the Brynn, the weather was very inclement, and being necessarily confined within doors, I had a better opportunity of forming a correct judgment of her situation than had hitherto been offered. Indeed so studiously does she endeavour both to be and to appear happy—so anxious is she to hide, or to soften the miseries to which the caprice and tyranny of **Lady Allyn**,

and the heat and mental intemperance of the Governor expose her—that did not facts, glaring as the noon-day, convince me to the contrary, I might be led to suppose, that happiness occasionally visited, with a genial beam, even the gloomy vale of Brynn-Allyn. But it is not so. To Mary Hastings the sun rises and sets with no variation from disquietude and discomfort. With the most generous of hearts and the sweetest of dispositions—with a smile that would animate a cynic, and draw from all but hearts of stone, a response of that tenderness, and gentleness, and good-will, which glow within it—she is doomed to waste the best of her days in a remote and inhospitable desert, whose appalling wildness and terrific glooms are rendered doubly intolerable by the peevishness, the tyranny, and the ingratitude of the only beings with whom she associates. A more complete devotion of youth, beauty, moral merit and mental worth, I never saw. I confess her motives, if indeed I know them ~~all~~, are inadequate to the sacrifice. A bl

ther's ease and luxury, are ill earned by a sister's misery.

Alas! when we look abroad into the world—when we call to mind the true situation of the various people with whom we are acquainted—how little real happiness is to be found enlightening the scenes of social intercourse, and casting its halo around the domestic hearth! It is, because the principles of christianity are approved rather than practised. We pass by the injunction, “though we have all... faith, yet without love we are nothing.” The “forbearing one another in love” is forgotten, when yielding ourselves to the suggestions of pride, and selfishness, we persecute those whom we should cherish, and tyrannize over those we should protect.

There is no peace for the resident at the Brynn. At first, the novelty of a new face, and the ceremony necessary to be observed before a stranger, have the effect of throwing a slender veil over much that is disagreeable—but as has happened in my case, when you pre-

sence becomes familiar, all restraint is thrown aside, and things assume their real aspect. It is difficult to describe the Governor and his Lady. Of the former, perhaps it is enough to say, that he is wayward, teasing, and a tedious pattern of that unwearied activity which does nothing itself, but hinders every body else. To hear him bluster, threaten, and command, one might imagine him to be the greatest domestic tyrant in existence, whereas, he has a heart as generous as his hand is liberal, and wearing the appearance of a perfect despot, and indeed fancying himself to be the absolute monarch of his household and his tenantry, he is the easiest man to manage by any appeal to his feelings, or by that most effectual species of flattery, apparent submission and deference. He is always scheming, and some wonderful plan is ever on foot, and though he has done little or nothing to his extensive domain, he has talked of improvements and alterations, till he actually fancies many of them have taken place, and that under

his direction, Bryam-Allyn has actually eclipsed every other property in the country... He is a most domineering justice of the peace, and while he affects to inflict penalties with all due severity, and punish transgressions to the extent of the law—in private, his own pocket is generally the sufferer for the rigour of his own sentences and costs, a quiet man of all—
In Lady Allyn there is one continual contradiction of principle and practice. No one can talk better—no one is more alive to the foibles of others; and their constant questions upon domestic happiness—yet no one abuses her privileges and advantages more than she does—
the very sight of her visage—the very sound of her voice—is a sure to drive ease and happiness to a distance. Her's is that peculiar kind of disposition, which ever bettings and amazings itself about little knaps of trifles, disjoins us of the smallest enjoyments of those around her. Without doing one single thing it assists, or alleviates the thousand duties of her importunate and dependent, she busies herself by meddling in the dimmest

rangements—commanding and counter-commanding—irascible, impatient, domineering—exacting from all far more than is due, and then in an equal proportion ungrateful and unfeeling. She has no inconsiderable portion of that low cunning which generally distinguishes narrow minds, and when contradicted in any whim or opinion, she cares not to attribute the most vulgar and even iniquitous motives, and indulges without scruple, in continued railing and loud abuse. She affects to be very religious, and very charitable. The former propensity is manifested, by an abundance of serious and hypocritical, and sanctified converse—by continual complaints against both ministers and people—and by enforcing upon all her establishment, a slavish series of exploded observances, in which, however, she pretends, that her health will not permit her to join. Her charity is of a like description. She gives nothing but what she had rather spare—and present or future convenience to herself, is the real object of all her acts of

benevolence. She founded a Sunday school in the little hamlet, at the extremity of the lake—but she exacted so much duty-work, was such a terror to the poor children, by her severe management, and interfered so impertinently and unfeelingly in the concerns of the cottagers, that her school was deserted, and a complaint was carried to the Governor of her proceedings, through the minister of the parish. Her many plans of charity and good works give great annoyance to the Archdeacon, and it was not till after repeated remonstrances, (and it is from her brother-in-law only, that she will endure even these) that she consented to relinquish all interference in the parish of Rynan. She exhibits, in short, that total want of delicacy and good-feeling—that all-absorbing selfishness and conceit, that invincible and intrusive impertinence, which one sometimes meets with in women whose rank and situation in life exempt them from those wholesome checks and severe retaliations which they so well merit.

Her poor niece has indeed much to endure. With a soul full of the most generous sensibility—with a happy temper, and a mind fraught with delicacy and proper feeling, she lives to have these constantly outraged, and from morning to night, she is seldom exempt from witnessing scenes of domestic disagreement, or having her comfort totally destroyed by unceasing querulousness, peevishness, and discontent. I do not know a greater trial, and one more difficult to support with patience, than a situation like this. That as age advances, and our interest in the mere pleasures of the world decreases, the temper should sometimes be a little affected, and the mind become more particular and precise—is but natural, and it is the bounden duty of all young persons to do all in their power, by respectful attention—by deference, and by the performance of every kind office, to sooth, to tranquillize, and to alleviate the infirmities of declining years. Yet that the superiority which age gives to the individual in his family, should be

abused to selfish and unworthy purposes—that he should be jealous of the enjoyments and happiness of those around him—that he should embitter the youthful days of his descendants by tyrannical exactions—by needless interference in their pleasures—by throwing the acid of his own bad humours into their cup of delight, is unwarrantable, and unchristianlike*. As amiable and placid old age is delightful to behold, and an object of universal love and veneration, so, when querulous, selfish, and domineering, it excites terror and dislike—the duties otherwise performed with willingness, and, frequently with delight, become irksome and disagreeable—natural affection is weakened, if not totally dissipated, and the removal of those whose decease under other circumstances, would be a cause of poignant grief, opens the door to liberty and enjoyment, and is sensibly felt as a necessary relief.

* Sunt morosi et anxi et iracundi et difficiles senes; si quærimus, etiam avari: sed hæc *morum* vitia sunt, non *se* *nectatis*.

DE SENECT.

It is an extraordinary thing to me, how people on the very verge of existence, can still retain their passions untamed, and their prejudices unsoftened—how with another life, in a very short perspective before them, they can cling so eagerly, so impatiently to this—be so interested in its concerns, be so ready to the last, to maintain their rights and privileges, and even allow fretfulness, peevishness, and a spirit of selfishness and restless dissatisfaction, to pursue them to their latest breath. At such a solemn period as that when the soul is preparing to leave the body and begin its flight, it knows not where, and trembles too for its final destination, one may reasonably suppose, that the mind would be equally subdued with the body—that while the one was prostrate and awaiting the sign when it must mingle again with the dust, the other would be softened, withdrawn from the perishable things around it, and be alive only to the awful change which is approaching. But frequently, it is far otherwise. The world, its affairs, its

pleasures, its losses and its gains, occupy the immortal soul, to the last stage of its pilgrimage, and it ascends to the presence of its God, to receive its doom for eternity with the follies and feelings of the world still fresh upon its lips.

The real cause of unhappy and morose old age, is to be found in the foregoing remarks. The humiliating retrospect of the days gone by, and the certain prospect of immortality, are the only proper considerations to occupy the mind of the aged. The former cannot fail of correcting many of those defects of our mortal nature, which a calm review of our past lives will bring forward in melancholy array, and the latter will elevate the soul above all worldly and grovelling considerations—will impress it deeply with the fleeting nature of every thing that is in our present grasp—and will teach it to aspire to higher and more noble objects. A desire to do our duty equally to ourselves and those around us, will influence every action in the close of life ; our eyes, fixed on scenes of far greater importance,

will disregard the trifling interests around us, and we shall await with awe, and yet with hope, the signal for our departure for a home that will be eternal!

I do not know any author who has treated this subject with greater feeling and eloquence, than that first of Roman orators and philosophers, Cicero. Though a heathen, he believed in the immortality of the soul, and the prospect of this, he makes one of the grand actuating principles of life. This world he looked upon as no abiding city*, and his departure out of it, he considered, not as expulsion from his habitation, but merely as if he were leaving an inn. As for old age, in his idea, it had “many inestimable advantages attached to it.” He represents it “as delivering us from the tyranny of lust and ambition; from the angry and contentious passions, as teaching us to retire within ourselves, and look for happiness in our own bosoms. If to these moral benefits, naturally result-

* “Commorandi enim natura diversorum nobis, non
bitandi dedit.”

ing from length of days, be added that sweet food of the mind which is gathered in the fields of science," he declares "that he knows not any season of life that is passed more agreeably than the learned leisure of a virtuous old age."

I never visit the Brynn, that these reflections do not crowd upon my mind. When I see the many capabilities of happiness existing there, and how lamentably they are all sacrificed,—when I observe the facility with which the greatest blessings are turned into evils,—when the utter want of proper reflection, of mutual forbearance, of good will and affectionate feeling, manifests itself at every turn,—when, finally, that most hateful of all principles, selfishness, openly supplies the motive to every action, scattering its poisonous influence alike upon the innocent and the guilty—I deplore the weakness and natural depravity of the human heart: "verily every man living is altogether vanity," do I exclaim with the holy Psalmist; "he

walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain."

Yet, amid this hurly burly of discontent, this factious clamouring, and this triumph of human infirmity, the Archdeacon's daughter stands apart. With an incredible command of temper, she gently yields to every blast of the storm: with a softness of manner and a sweetness of disposition truly wonderful, she is ever labouring to cheer, to sooth, and to please; and her generous heart, though feeling deeply the miseries and privations of her situation, is ever endeavouring to hide them, if not from herself, at least from others. There is to me a something peculiarly affecting in such a determined devotion to the calls of duty. In her whole conduct is visible, the influence of that noble principle, that life is but a state of trial—a preparation for another and a happier state of existence. Did we all bear this in mind, and regulate our conduct by the awful remonstrance which it conveys, what a very dif-

ferent aspect would the world present—how much more frequently would happiness and domestic harmony visit and enliven the fire-side scenes of private life!

What a fine, what a noble exertion is it of virtuous principle, to labour to reach the very letter of our duties, in spite of all difficulties and all discouragements! Our fortitude is wont to fail us when duty becomes oppressive or disagreeable. It requires a mind, strengthened by pure religious views, to maintain with stern and uncompromising integrity, the course which conscience marks out for us to pursue. Human nature is ingenious in discovering plausible excuses for the non-performance of what is unpalatable: yet constancy brings its own reward at last. There is a balm—an inward satisfaction in the consciousness of having done our duty, of which, nothing in the world can rob us, and one moment's enjoyment of which is more to be prized than all the triumphs of selfishness and heartless indulgence. Mankind may quarrel and

dispute about theological niceties—they may pride themselves upon the strict orthodoxy of their opinions—but if they do not carry their religion further than their closets, nor suffer it to influence any thing but their tongues, all their disputing is vain—their very orthodoxy is an insult to the Deity. “ The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance : against such there is no law.’ The sincerity of our religious professions can only be judged of by our actions—and were I to find the most eloquent advocate of christian truth, and the most scrupulous observer of the external forms of religion, obstinate, selfish, tyrannical and overbearing in the various relations of private life—whatever such a person’s public character might be, I should pronounce his religion vain, his christianity mere words, and his philanthropy a depraved love of distinction and popular applause. It is to the *inward man* that God looketh, and he who acts the christian in the various domestic scenes

which the public eye cannot pry into or applaud, is working more surely to the great end of his creation, than the sanctified hypocrite, whose piety exhausts itself in churches and crowded assemblies, in the streets, and in the highways.

The Brynn.

BUT two months, and we are to have you a resident in “the vallies!” With what joy do I contemplate the arrival of that happy, thrice happy period. All here begins now to wear a cheerful aspect; the summer heats are moderated—the late gentle showers have filled the springs and brooks, and refreshed the upland pastures, to the great joy of our poor farmers. My dear father too has resumed his duties at Rynan, and received in form the very sincere and affectionate congratulations of his parishioners. To have seen them crowd around the carriage as it drove up the avenue—to have heard the loud greetings of the young, and the still more pathetic blessings of the aged—and more than all, to have witnessed the happiness of my father in again retiring into the bosom of his family, and to have seen the tears of grateful emotion which bedewed his still pallid cheeks,

would have filled you with the tenderest and the most affecting sensations. Though frequently called by his official duties to the bustle and noise of the city, and obliged to come forward on many public occasions, yet that distinction and popular applause which always attend his efforts, are by no means objects of his ambition—his whole soul is in his parish and in his family. His kind and affectionate heart is highly susceptible of local attachments, and he has more real pleasure in conversing with any of his poor peasantry whom he may meet, or in sitting under a favourite tree, and watching the cattle, or marking the variations of the prospect before him, than others have in festivities and gay meetings, and the busy hum of population and gaiety. It is to the *continued* pleasure which these simple enjoyments afford, that I would attach the appellation of real rural taste. You citizens of the great world think it enough to hurry through nature's loveliest scenes in a light carriage, whirled along by four of the swiftest steeds, and

regaining the crowded haunts of men once more, there talk of all you have seen and all you ought to have seen, and exercise your imaginations in the lively description of pastoral pleasures which you never experienced.

I spent yesterday at Rynan. The Governor drove me over, and we returned this morning. I arrived in time to be present on a very melancholy occasion. You do not forget what you were pleased to term my "romantic and somewhat highly coloured" description of poor Jasper. He died a few days ago, worn out by the insane energies of his own mind. For several weeks before his death, he was remarkably quiet and tractable, as if conscious of the great change which was awaiting him. At my father's request, I accompanied him as far as the village, and while sitting in one of the cottages saw the last solemn obsequies performed over this strange and unfortunate young man. It was a scene which would have well suited the gloomy and ascetic temperament of Jasper him-

self. The evening was dark and lowering. The ground was wet and cheerless with the recent rains, and the wind in melancholy gusts moaned through the ancient yew trees, or whistled over the long grass. No one but the poor and afflicted widow appeared as a mourner. The bearers, after depositing the corpse in its narrow cell, departed one after another, and at length, the earth having been heaped up over the grave, no one remained but the broken-hearted mother, who still lingered to hallow with her tears, the sod which now separated her from the last tie which bound her to the earth. I was much affected with this genuine and solitary exhibition of parental attachment. It is wonderfully ordered by nature, that the tender feelings of a mother should be peculiarly directed towards the more infirm and helpless of their offspring. At least, I have frequently observed it to be so, though I may be incorrect in laying it down as a general principle. Notwithstanding all his waywardness—his many

wants, which she found it very difficult to supply—his uncertain humours and dangerous propensities, which allowed her no domestic peace, yet the poor widow at the Duglin manifested an ardour of attachment towards this unfortunate son, which she would not probably have felt towards one who stood in less need of her care and her protection.

This afflicted and bereaved mother was gently withdrawn from the indulgence of her sorrows, by a kind neighbour, to whose care my father has for the present consigned her. He has prevailed upon her to leave the wild moor on which she has so long resided, and a neat cottage at Ladyston has been assigned to her by Mr. Tempest, at my father's request. Indeed she is so active, and so superior in many things to our mere mountaineers, that she will prove a desirable acquisition to him, and be no mean auxiliary in the prosecution of certain of his parochial plans.

I am glad you approve of the proposed alterations at “the Place,” but am unwil-

ling to venture any description of the situation, fearing you may be disappointed. However, as you request it, I must indulge you with a short sketch. The house, as you will perceive by the plan, is a square, and the various apartments are all connected with each other. To this old-fashioned arrangement some people object much, but there indeed it is well managed, as closets and double doors generally intervene betwixt the rooms. The hill on which the house is situated, rises very abruptly from the flat level of some rich pastures and meadows which reach to the shore of the estuary. Looking immediately over this beautiful green plain, and again over an expanse of water, about five miles across, the eye rests upon a varied picturesque shore on the opposite coast, backed by a long well wooded ridge, beyond which the distant mountains of ——— rear their lofty peaks. When the sun glances upon various parts of the further shore, the ruins of castles, the white spires of several villages with their clustering cottages,

the woody recesses of an ancient forest may be distinctly seen, and the course of two important rivers, which fertilize and enrich two celebrated vales, may be traced by the beautiful intersections of the mountains through which they flow. At the foot of the hill, and immediately under the mansion, is the little village with its smiling orchards and ancient elms, and from each side of the lawn which surrounds you, extensive copse woods crown the brow and ornament the declivity of the ridgy eminence, almost as far as the eye can reach. In these are some beautiful walks and seats, which, however, except in very hot weather, you will not frequent much, for the lawn affords one of the finest terraces imaginable. The view is to the west, and the occasional magnificence of the setting sun is indescribable. With the exception of a deep glen, ornamented with scattered groves of oak to the north of the house, the lands backwards continue level till they gently decline to an extensive valley to the eastward. I shall say no more. I only

regret, that your first visit will be so late in the year, and still more that it will be necessarily so short.

We are all obliged by your enquiries, and particularly by your kind husband's offer with regard to poor Robert. I am desired to say, that as he would be incapable, from the peculiarity of his habits, of doing justice to the otherwise most desirable situation you mention, my father begs, with all proper acknowledgments, to decline it. Indeed I am happy to say, that he is now fixed entirely to his wish. The greater the seclusion, the greater the happiness, appears to be the idea equally of my brother and his wife. Accordingly my father has placed him on a large farm of his own, about twenty miles northward of Rynan, and the Governor has most liberally promised, nay, insisted, that the expences of stocking, furnishing, &c. &c. should devolve upon himself. This is such substantial kindness, and it is moreover exercised in so considerate and so unostentious a way, that my esteem for our eccentric, but

worthy relative, daily gains ground, and I am almost ready to accuse myself of ingratitude for the occasional impatience, which in spite of myself, I sometimes manifest. My brother has not yet appeared among us, nor indeed is it my father's wish at present to see him. Though there are certainly many circumstances to palliate his indiscretion, yet with one of Robert's temper, it is necessary to evince the severest displeasure against so flagrant a disregard of the feelings and interests of his family. Mr. Tempest, who has been a most kind and considerate friend to us during the whole progress of this unfortunate affair, concurs in the plan which is adopted ;—at the same time, he assures us, that the excellent sense and good feeling of poor Jane, promise an abundant harvest of real happiness and comfort to her husband. Yet, I shudder as I say it, it is not one instance in a hundred where such disproportionate matches are attended, either with the one or the other. Such selfish connexions are always begun in folly, and can scarcely end otherwise

than in misery. Besides, there is an imperative duty which a man owes to his kindred, which ought to fortify his mind against even the bare idea of such a dangerous attempt.

I told you of the liberal offers which had been made to the verderer by Mr. Tempest and the Governor. He refuses them all, and declares that no offers could tempt him to remain within a league's distance of such a person as Lady Allyn. He has accepted a tract of sheep-walk from Mr. Tempest, which lies some miles from Ladyston. It is the wildest portion of this wild district, but he will there have abundance of room and opportunity to continue the gratification of his sporting propensities. His independent and solitary habits exactly fit him for the situation he has selected, and his landlord intends to make him useful in acting as a kind of check upon the lawless pursuits of his neighbours. Many parts of the country might be thus recolonized with considerable benefit, both to the proprietors and the community, and it is upon

this plan that the great landholders are for the future intending to act. Nothing is so effectual for the removal of pernicious combinations—for exciting the industry of the people—for breaking through old and hurtful prejudices—for rooting out established feuds, as the encouragement in these remote districts of new settlers—who introduce a spirit of emulation, and if well selected, communicate a new tone to the society of which they become members.

Ladyston.

A VENERABLE old man, dressed in the interesting and antique costume of these hills, with a face browned and furrowed with many a revolving season, his staff in one hand and his hat in the other, was this morning introduced into my study. Under all the deference and respect which he exhibited, for it was with difficulty I could persuade him to be seated, there was great shrewdness and quick observation manifested. He prefaced his business by stating that he had been under my family for three generations of men—that he came to thank me in his own name, and that of his neighbours, for the advantages they should now enjoy in having a landlord at last settled amongst them; but, above all, he came to talk with me a little about spiritual matters, for they had been told that I was willing to listen to poor ignorant people, and an-

swer what they had to say. He was not, he continued, the only one, who was anxious to go hand in hand in all things with his landlord, and therefore, as they had got a church minister among them in that capacity, he should like to hear my opinion on one point, for he should wish to have his own mind satisfied before he left his old habits, and attended what was called the lawfully appointed place of public worship.

I received this invitation joyfully, because where the mind is willing to be convinced, truth has an easy task to perform. So thoroughly am I persuaded in my own mind of the utility, the expediency, the excellence, nay, the necessity of our various ecclesiastical regulations and ordinances, that I would on all occasions press the strictest scrutiny into their nature and intent, conscious that our church has hit the exact medium between that superstition which overburdens, and that enthusiasm which degrades the pure worship of Almighty God.

The point upon which my venerable mountaineer wished to be informed, was concerning a set form of prayer and sermons delivered from a book. He thought that they did not afford the same means of grace, nor equally affect the heart, as discourses and prayers which were unpremeditated; and if so, why were the churches burthened with them, to the great weariness and checking of the spirit of the godly? During my long residence in the metropolis, I was accustomed occasionally to gratify my taste by attending these places of worship, whether established or schismatical, where the most popular orators of the day held forth. Rhetoric, and not edification, was my object. Yet in all my various ramblings from the established churches of the land, my taste, my feelings of propriety, and my judgment, were outraged by the practice of extempore prayer. Extempore preaching I could occasionally admire, and in some few cases approve; but prayers, uttered from the momentary

caprice of one man, my feelings could never accompany—the matter and manner generally annoyed me, and when ended, they afforded me no satisfaction. Prayer I conceive to be the noblest part of God's worship. Preaching is far, very far subordinate. Yet most of the non-conformist ministers made public prayer an insignificant service—the ebullition of one mind and one mouth, not the combined voice and spirit of the whole assembly—while preaching was exalted to an indecorous and hurtful importance, shewing indeed the garrulity of man, but adding little comparatively to the glory of God. “By preaching,” says bishop Bull, “we are taught *how* to worship God; but prayer is *itself* God's worship.”

Decency and order in public worship are most particularly to be observed. “Let all things be done unto edifying,” says St. Paul. Now to observe this rule is impossible, if the ministration of the gospel is to be left to the self-will and

caprice of every one who is ordained to teach. Such is the waywardness of human nature—such its weakness, that even virtuous zeal itself, if undirected and uncontrouled, would oftentimes, by indiscretion and want of knowledge, rather injure than serve the cause which it took in hand. Accordingly, from the apostolic age to the present time, authorized forms of prayer have been used in the churches, as calculated to preserve that decency and uniformity, which are equally pleasing to God, and beneficial to man. There is a something elevating and delightful in the idea, that the whole congregation, minister and people, are uniting in heart and voice—in the same authorized words and sentiments—in adoring and praying to their Maker—that on a set time and a set day, the universal voice of the Christian church is thus raised to the throne of grace. Prayer thus decently offered up, is the most acceptable incense that can ascend to Heaven. The accents of the preacher reach the ears, and, perhaps, the hearts of the auditors, but prayer is wafted

to the seats of bliss, and is heard in the courts of our God.

If we consult the page of history, we shall read in its chequered scenes how fatal have been the results, where enthusiasm has set itself up above the wholesome ordinances of ecclesiastical government, and despising authorities, has wantoned in its own licentiousness. The true churchman, the well-judging Christian, shudders at the recollection of such evils. He thanks God for the blessings he enjoys in an authorized liturgy, services, ceremonies, and ordinances. In these he finds ample materials for the exercise of a true devotional spirit—a spirit of *humility*, a spirit of contrition, a spirit of thankfulness. They are a lantern to his feet—they assist his weakness and his ignorance—they supply, they comfort his infirmities—they are a helm to keep him in his course, lest he should wander from the truth, and be cast away.

The necessity of prescribed forms has been often and most ably argued. They are the bulwarks which secure the esta-

blished doctrine and faith of the church—they exhibit the *condition* of public communion—they ensure decency and order—they are an effectual bar against the insidious intrusion of heterodox and heretical persons into the ministry, and the crafty dissemination of their principles by so plausible an organ, and they curb those levities and indecencies, yea, we may add, those blasphemies*, which have been too often practised to the disgrace of religion, to the disgust of pious persons, and to the lamentable increase of irreligion and atheism.

Yet, overlooking all these advantages, the non-conformist objects that set forms do not edify; that they want warmth, spirit, and vigour. That we deny. Our admirable liturgy exhibits, in every passage, a greater proportion of these qualities than any other form ever yet conceived, or executed; and to compare the

* “I would give you some sad instances,” says a very learned divine, discoursing on this subject, “ but I delight not to rake in that dunghill.”

meagre effusions of unpremeditated prayer with this sublime and most scriptural composition, is an absurdity scarcely to be ventured upon. The objectors to prescribed forms are frequently persons who seek entertainment rather than edification in their religion—who would have their passions excited rather than their reason convinced—who please themselves by perpetual variety, instead of honouring God by a sober uniformity—who, despising that mode of worship which satisfied the primitive confessors and martyrs, “turn aside unto vain janglings, desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm*.” To the rational, the sincere, the *humble* Christian, our formula of devotion is invaluable. If I may judge of the feelings of others by my own, our liturgy improves and becomes more delightful and salutary the more we become acquainted with it. If we use it in that true spirit of devout humility, with which

* 1st Epistle to Timothy, i. 6, 7.

it was intended to be accompanied, its benefits and its sober influences are incalculable; and soon would the unpremeditated effusions of congregational leaders sink, in our estimation, to their proper level, and stand apparent in all their unstableness and all their poverty.

To extemporaneous preaching no objections can be made, providing that no one adventured upon it but really prudent and pious persons. It is a great mistake of the common people, that to preach without book is an exhibition of superior talent. It is far otherwise. There are many very silly and ignorant persons who can shew off in this way, without any trouble or any thought; whereas there are many of the most learned and able divines, who neither possess nor affect this gift of garrulity. It is far greater praise to write a good sermon than to spout a poor one. Many can harangue and vociferate who could not string two arguments together on paper. Our church does not directly censure extemporaneous preaching; but experience has proved,

that, were it enjoined, the congregations must generally put up with very meagre fare. Written discourses, for the most part, ensure that caution in the doctrines, and that conciseness in the delivery of them, which are necessary for a good understanding of the faith. They are a wholesome check upon that egotism—that conceit—that estimation of the poor faculties of man in the presence of God—that desire of argument and idle discussion, which deform and destroy every thing of the harangues of the greatest and most bold soldiers forth. We have had instances, both in the established church and out of it, whose eloquence, and whose exhortations, were animating and inspiring; but this is rarely the case. I have known instances, in which equal feeling and equal interest, attended too with as great hearers, in the delivery of an unwritten discourse; extemporaneous effusion, has produced that clearness and that convincing strength

of argument—that calm and impressive dignity and composure, which are manifested in the compositions of some of our dignitaries and learned divines. Were religion a mere matter of temporary feeling, I would have all its offices goading and enthusiastic: novelty and endless variety should be enlisted into the service, and all its ministers should be men of eccentric imaginations, rather than of deep learning and sober judgment. But the very wise and pious reformers of our church knew that order and decency, regularity and uniformity of worship, were most acceptable to God, and most agreeable to the injunctions of his Son; that the proper seat of religion was in the reason and not in the passions; that sudden fits and starts, and rousings of the soul, were of no avail, but rather wearied than invigorated; that a blaze consumed the oil in the lamp, whereas a regular and a steady light could alone cause it to burn till the bridegroom cometh.

Ladyston.

IT was much objected to the puritans of Edward the Sixth's time, that they suffered the most absurd and erroneous opinions concerning election and justification by faith, to influence their lives and actions, to the manifest disparagement of their morality. On these two points I have had considerable difficulty in my own parish. Ignorant men, stringing a few tents together, talk and argue upon these difficult subjects, with a confidence and a presumption which would have astonished and grieved the apostles themselves. And yet after all, how, from a candid and close perusal of the epistles, any such strange notions as those of individual election, and a saving faith without works, can be extracted, is the amazement of all rational Christians.

Should a man come to me with his testament in his hand, and require an ex-

planation of the doctrine of justification, as set forth in the primary chapters of St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, how should I satisfy his scruples, or how curb his immoral exultation at the idea of "man being justified by faith without the deeds of the law?"

In the first place, I should flatly contradict the inference which he draws from St. Paul's expression, by referring him to the passage where the apostle himself distinctly states, as *preliminary* to the succeeding discussion, that "God will render to every man according to his *deeds*: to them, who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality—eternal life. But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath." Again, I would point out to him that very striking observation in the first epistle to Timothy, where the apostle exhorts him "to hold faith, and a *good conscience*, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck."

I should then argue, that to suppose the apostle capable of flatly contradicting himself, would at once impugn his credit and destroy all his pretensions to inspiration. When therefore he mentions "faith as justifying without deeds of the law," common justice will, after the texts above quoted, compel us to search for some qualifying argument—some explanatory declaration, in the context, which will preserve that consistency of doctrine which is so necessary a quality in a teacher of the gospel. In order to do this, I would further refer my interrogator to the following chapter, where the nature of that faith which justifies, is clearly defined, under the denomination of "Abraham's faith." Now Abraham's faith was not a faith without works. It is clear, then, that the faith mentioned by the apostle, cannot be understood as a faith without works, since it is compared so directly to the faith of Abraham. But what says St. James, arguing on this very subject? "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had

offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and *by works was faith made perfect.*" Chap. ii. 21, 22.

It is absurd then to argue, that there is such a thing as a saving faith without works. St. Paul himself disavows it, and there is no such doctrine either declared, or even to be inferred, from any part whatever of the sacred writings. Nay, the passages are abundant which declare against this fatal delusion. St. Paul tells the Philippians "to *work out* their own salvation*;" and, by way of encouragement to do this, they are assured, in the next verse, that if they work, God will work with them. In the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians, the apostle is likewise found laying great and particular stress upon the exercise of every human virtue, which exercise he comprehends under the name of "charity." He tells us, that though we have "the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries,

* Chap. ii. 12.

and all knowledge; and though we have all faith"—*yet, if we have "not charity, we are nothing."* Again, in the last verse of the same chapter, summing up his arguments, he says. "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is *charity.*"

"Go," I would say in conclusion to my interrogator, "and endeavour to attain this charity, and such a faith as Abraham's—a faith manifested by obedience—operative, implicit. 'By faith he went out, not knowing whither he went'—by faith he would have offered up his son—by faith he trusted in the declarations of God; in fine, it was by his constant endeavours at *obedience*, by his constant reliance, not upon his own merits, but upon God's promises—that his faith assumed its proper character, and 'was counted to him for righteousness.'—'Go,' I would say, "and imitate this example, and then mayest thou realize the true import of the declaration,

‘that by faith a man is justified without the deeds of the law.’”

In reading those abtruse passages, which abound in St. Paul’s admirable epistles, we should use the utmost care and diligence to arrive at the true meaning. A spirit* of humility is a most necessary accompaniment to the perusal of all the sacred writings. Even St. Peter observes, that there are “some things” in the writings of his coadjutor, “difficult to be understood,” and which the ignorant and the unlearned are apt to “wrest to their own destruction.” The doctrine of justification by faith, and not by works, is in itself, however the pride of man may resist it, most reconcileable to common sense, and private experience. Faith and deeds of the law are put by the apostle in manifest opposition. There are two modes of procuring our salvation—*faith*,

* As his ways are plain unto the holy, so are they stumbling blocks unto the wicked.—Ecclesiasticus, xxix. 24.

accompanied by such a measure of obedience as our weak nature, with its utmost efforts, is capable of rendering—and *deeds of the law*, by which is to be understood a degree of moral perfection, which it is out of the reach of our depraved nature to attain. *Justification*, then, by *deeds of the law*, is a mere chimera. No one ever performed to the letter the *deeds of the law*—no one, therefore, has been justified by them. Where St. Paul states, that “a man is justified by faith without the *deeds of the law*,” he does not mean to say, that there is a faith which excludes those *deeds*; numerous and very forcible passages prove to the contrary; he would be understood to convey, that it is solely by a faith such as Abraham’s—a faith full of obedience, implicit, and full of dependence—a faith which worketh by love, that we can, through the merits and the death of Christ, be justified in the eyes of God; and that as no man, as yet, hath perfectly conformed to the *deeds of the law*, so it is impossible for him to be jus-

tified by that which it is out of his power, through the corruption of his nature, to perform. “Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Ladyston.

I HOLD no doctrine of individual election, because such doctrine is irreconcileable with the attributes of God, and the free agency of man. It takes away all hope; and St. Paul tells us, “ we are saved by hope.” That God’s foreknowledge pointed out to him our fall, and the same attribute enables his eye to discern those who will accept the conditions of salvation, must be allowed. Further than this, it is impious to dive into the decrees of Providence; nor can the favour of God, nor the charity of Christian doctrine, be theirs, whose cold-blooded hearts can harbour such a sentiment, as that the majority of their fellow creatures, amongst whom must be numbered many of their dearest friends, are inevitably, and, in spite of themselves, devoted and preordained to destruction. Such is not the

spirit of the benevolent gospel of Christ ; and even were I not able to satisfy my mind as to the precise meaning of some of St. Paul's expressions, I should never construe them into such a sense; but resting my confidence upon those parts of scripture, which are of a direct opposite tendency, and they are sufficiently abundant, I would pray to God to enlighten my understanding as to the rest, and, above all, to preserve me from the danger of *presumption*. Truly he is merciful, for he " spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us *all*." "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.*" " The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto *all* men†." " The Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that *any* should perish, but that all should come to repentance‡." In the epistle to the Colossians, St. Paul declares the object of his preaching to be,

* 1 Thess. v. 9. † Titus, ii. 11.

‡ St. Peter, Ep. 2d, iii. 9.

that he might “present *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus.”

Perhaps the ninth chapter of Romans bears hardest upon this disputed subject—a subject which, by its baffling the wisest and the best—by driving some to despair, others to a ruinous indifference, and many, alas! to what is worst of all—a fatal confidence—manifests to man, and is doubtless intended so to do, the danger of presumptuously diving into useless speculations on incomprehensible points, and neglecting what is plain and practical in religion, for what is dark and ambiguous, and, no doubt, intended by God to remain so. “There is,” says Isidore of Pelusium, “a divine wisdom in ordering some things in the holy scriptures to be very plain, and others obscure, at once to encourage our investigation, and to check our presumption.” Yet even in the chapter mentioned, St. Paul in the disputed passages seems to be referring merely to the power which God had, in perfect conformity with his justice of preferring the seed of Isaac and of Jacob

to that of Ishmael and of Esau, *to be his chosen people*—an honour and a mercy, which God had it as much in his power to bestow upon any particular nation or family, as the potter has power over the clay to make of it what he chooses. Yet the honouring of one family or tribe, by committing to them his oracles, and raising from their number the Messiah, who was to save *all*, by no means implies that God restricted salvation to them. So far from that, the apostle expressly says “they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.” The meaning therefore to be imputed to this chapter is, that where election and God’s power of determining the fate of his creatures are mentioned, St. Paul is referring to the election of one particular tribe to be the depositaries of his will, and the watching over them with a particular providence, with a view to the great blessing which was from them in aftertimes to be conveyed to all nations and all languages, from one corner of the earth to the other. And to this elucida-

tion, do the reasonings of our best divines tend.

That man is to a certain degree a free agent, the whole voice of scripture maintains. If not, why is he enjoined to “work out his own salvation?” Why does St. Paul himself declare, that “if a man purge *himself*” from heterodox persons and notions, “he shall be a vessel unto honour?” Why, in his epistle to the Ephesians, does he mention them as “pre-destinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; “ yet afterwards, in the fourth chapter of the same epistle, strenuously exhort them to good works—that they “would walk worthy of the vocation by which they were called,” and “be renewed in the spirit of their minds,” “lest they grieve the holy spirit of God?” hereby certainly implying, that they all were predestinated to partake of the mercies of God in the gospel, providing they chose to accept it; at the same time, that being received into

the church, and made by baptism and conversion joint heirs with Christ, they did not necessarily *retain* this distinction, except they endeavoured in all things to walk worthy of their vocation, but might nevertheless perish, like the rebellious angels of God.

The following are some of the most remarkable texts, upon which I ground my belief in universal redemption.—“*Go ye,*” says our Lord to his apostles, “*into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature**.” Why to every creature, if the majority cannot be benefitted by it? “*God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life†.*” “*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,*” says St. Paul, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to *every one* that believeth ‡.” “*Christ,*” says St. John in his gospel, is “*the true light which lighteth every man*

* *Mark vi. 15.* † *John iii. 16.*

‡ *Rom. i. 16.*

that cometh into the world*.” St. Peter declares, “that God is not willing that *any* should perish, but that all should come to repentance;” and St. Paul says in the Hebrews, that “Christ by the grace of God tasted death for *every man*;” and again, in the 1st epistle to Timothy, that “God will have all men to be saved.”

Against such plain and positive declarations as these, all the arguments in the world can do nothing; yet these are not a tenth part of the passages which could be produced from holy writ, equally positive and convincing, in support of the doctrine of universal redemption. The wild notions of election and reprobation have been long and indignantly rejected by the more learned and better judging portion of the Christian world, and they, who within the bosom of our own church, entertain secretly or openly these absurd visions, appear to act and think inconsistently, being visibly members of the

* Chap. i. 9.

established religion, while in doctrine they oppose and impugn its very spirit. In the articles of our church—in its liturgy—in its offices—in its catechisms, and its homilies, we find no such doctrines either maintained or even alluded to: far different were the tenets of our great reformers; and it was a very different race of men from a Cranmer, a Ridley, a Latimer, and a Jewell, who first entertained, and then ventured to propagate, such glaring and heretical absurdities.

But why so warmly argue against a system of faith, which is equally opposed to the Divine attributes of justice and mercy—to the scriptures themselves—to the opinions of the apostles and fathers—and to the common sense and common feeling of all mankind? Why waste time and thought in the discussion of doctrines, which make so humiliating—so lamentable a display of human weakness and presumption? It is impossible for a person calmly and coolly to advocate such shocking principles, who does

not conceive *himself* to be of one of the elect, and so to think, with his bible in his hand, and its precepts fresh in his memory, is an affront to God, and an impious prejudication of his fellow creatures, the consequences of which are declared, and are awful to reflect upon.

Before concluding this discussion, however, there is one extraordinary notion, which I must mention as the favourite accompanying tenet of those persons, who being, in their own opinion, of the elect, look upon the great majority of their fellow mortals as in a reprobate state. I will give it in the words of the fifth article of the Synod of Dort, headed thus—“ Of the certainty of perseverance.” *That such as have once received that grace by faith, can never fall from it finally or totally, notwithstanding the most enormous sins they can commit.* To set down such an assertion, is argument sufficient against it.

A man would scarcely set himself seriously to work to disprove such an

enormous absurdity, and had I not myself heard this notion laid down and attempted to be defended by sundry of my own parishioners, I should be difficult to persuade that any such idea obtained credance, either in the Christian or the heathen world. “Brethren,” says St. Paul to the Philippians, talking of the prize of eternal life and salvation, for which we are all contending, “I count not myself to have apprehended*.” Yea, so convinced am I of this, that I give up all for Christ—I live in a perpetual warfare with the world and the devil, “if by any means I *might* attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, *if that I may apprehend* that, for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.” What a different spirit breathes here! St. Paul, an apostle in bonds, and on the point of bearing witness to the truth with his blood, deemed not himself secure of his

* Chap. iii. 11, 12, 13.

salvation, while there was a possibility of a relapse ; and yet there are to be found amongst us presuming and deluded persons, who, making themselves certain of being already numbered with the elect, by God's eternal decree, would justify even their very enormities, their pride, their presumption, their sensuality, their hypocrisy, as if they were the actual workings of the holy spirit of God*!

Yet after all, arguments and speculations founded upon the mysteries of our faith, are productive of little good. The sense of our apostolic church is best taken on such subjects, and if she stops short in her enquiries, how much more doth it behove us. When rash and presumptuous persons, setting up their own unhallowed conceptions against the belief of ages, separate from the church, and venture amid the quicksands of doubt and uncertainty, there is no judging where

* See Epis. to the Coloss. i. 23. Hebrews, x. 38. 2d Epis. of St. Peter, i. 8, 10. Id. ii. 18, 20, 21. Rev. ii. 4, 5, as setting forth the true Christian doctrine, concerning the falling away from grace received.

they may stop. Against such proud infatuation, God has declared his judgments.—“As his ways are plain unto the holy, so are they stumbling-blocks unto the wicked.” He who deserts the true apostolic church of Christ, and runs after his own inventions, is leaving the star which guides him steadily to the point, and following an uncertain meteor, whose glare, however alluring at first, will at length prove deadly. “When religion is made a science,” says the amiable Bishop Wilson, “nothing is more intricate,—when it is made a duty, nothing is more easy.”

Ladyston.

BY the accession of a few new inhabitants—by the employment which the improvements now carrying on in the forest and on the roads, and the building of a new quay occasion—my little village begins to assume an air of activity which has been long foreign to it. I have the pleasure too of seeing many of the neighbouring yeomen's families resuming their seats in the church, and the ancient benches of oak, which occupy the centre of the nave, so far from being deserted as I at first found them, now present a very respectable appearance. This is encouraging, and the efficacy of the Archdeacon's policy in these matters, becomes pleasingly apparent.

I have been lately extending my visitations to the alms-houses. These abodes of misery too often require the scrutinizing eye of the parish priest. There is

not a more mercenary, nor a more unfeeling set of men, than sundry of our country overseers. Providing they can contrive to escape the penalties of the law, there is no neglect, no insults, no cruelties which they will not exercise upon the poor and destitute. Not that there are not provocations sufficient to make them exact, and even occasionally severe—for the worst members of society are generally found among the poorest—but their gross inattention to the cleanliness and comfort of the miserable abodes under their charge, is too often highly reprehensible and unfeeling. The alms-houses at Ladyston are apart from the road, and divided from the rest of the village by an eminence which hides them from view. There are twelve dwellings surrounding a small gloomy quadrangle, in the middle of which is the common pump. Over the entrance are engraved the arms of my mother's family, in sad mockery of the poverty and meanness of the occupiers. People receiving parish relief are admitted here, and by the will of the founder,

each family frequenting the church regularly, is entitled to a loaf on Sundays, and a certain quantity of faggots from the forest on Christmas-day. So far the establishment is beneficial and merciful, but the state of the dwellings, the habits of the inmates, and the custom of over-crowding, by frequently apportioning one room for the reception of several individuals, convert these abodes, intended for the welfare and comfort of our less fortunate fellow-creatures, into disgusting dens of filthiness, licentiousness, and misery.

These alms-houses form quite a separate community,—they comprise a little world within themselves. The vices, however, and evil affections of more general society, predominate here too over the virtues. Narrow-mindedness, cruelty, and selfishness in their treatment of and dealings with each other—loud abuse and malicious slander, are the too frequent characteristics of the inmates, who thus contrive to load poverty and abject dependence with the additional burthen of

human folly and infirmity. There is, however, occasionally to be found a pleasing exception to this general picture. Aged persons who have seen better days, and whose honest means of support have fled with their strength, still in these dreary abodes to which sad necessity has driven them, endeavour to keep up in some degree, that decency of conduct and cleanliness in their habits to which in other times they were accustomed. Sometimes pride will exhibit itself in a way somewhat surprising, in these lowly dwellings. Of all human weaknesses, one would think that pride had the least chance of finding an entrance here. Yet there is an aged female whom I visit, who carries her prejudices on this score to a most surprising length. She was the wife of a once opulent farmer, who died insolvent. Compelled by poverty and old age to take refuge in the almshouse, she declined from the beginning any intercourse with the other inmates. Though bent almost double by severe rheumatic attacks, and scorning

all assistance but that to which she conceives herself legally entitled, her apartment is the neatest and cleanest in the establishment. Her objection to being thought an object of charity is such, that if in relieving her little wants, I have not some plausible reason to allege, which satisfies her mind on this subject, she invariably rejects the proffered bounty, though suffering at the moment under the joint evils of pain and starvation. Her figure, once tall and interesting, now thin almost to emaciation, and bent low under the pressure of years of affliction, is venerable and affecting. Unlike her neighbours, she never utters a complaint. Her bible and prayer-book, the sole remnants of better days, are her constant companions, and the only solace to which she flies amid all her sorrows. When I sometimes endeavour to enliven her mind and raise her spirits by conversation, she thanks me, but shakes her head, as if my efforts were unavailing, and opening her Bible, points out generally the seventeenth and eighteenth verses of the fourth chap-

ter of St. Paul's 2d Epistle to the Corinthians, wishing thereby to demonstrate her sources of consolation and hope, than which she aims at none other. She considers it a great indulgence in being allowed to live by herself, a privilege which it is my intention to secure to her, by settling her in the first vacant cottage in the village. Here her pride and stiffness may relax, and she may in time be prevailed upon to accept of comforts. Her's is, however, no common character among paupers, and I have dwelt the more upon it from its extreme rarity.

In the next dwelling, two old women reside, of very opposite dispositions to their "lady neighbour," as they term her. These poor creatures, without being destitute of good qualities, contrive to make themselves as miserable as possible, by quarrelling together on the most trivial occasions, and pestering the whole establishment by their complaints, and by taking an impudent interest in the concerns of every family of which it is composed. When two men or two wo-

men are put together in the same dwelling, it is reasonably enough presumed, that by exerting a little christian charity and forbearance, they may be a mutual help and consolation to each other, and that by making common fare, their slender pittance may go further. But this is seldom the case. In spite of age, poverty, infirmities, and a speedy prospect of leaving a world which can have no ties for them, yet do these neglected beings dispute and revile, harass and tyrannize over each other, with a rancour and a violence, which is not known in any other order of society. The two women I have mentioned, are melancholy examples of this strange infatuation. I find them frequently wasting their slender stock of fire-wood, by making separate fires on the hearth, not being able to agree upon a joint one, and thus by disputing about a single stick, they lose a whole faggot. And this principle actuates the whole proceedings of these unfortunates, and extends indeed in no small degree to all who are similarly

situated. My interference and remonstrances compel them to acknowledge the folly of such proceedings, but I cannot prevail upon them to relinquish them.

Were I to detail the complaints of the generality of the inmates of this asylum of poverty, it would afford subjects for many a scene in tragedy—were I to recount their sayings of and to one another, it would supply a comedy. Their cunning and plausibility—their eagerness to over-reach each other, and the strange waywardness of their habits and prejudices, are frequently so absurdly visible, that they excite a smile even when the heart is really pained. In no communities is there a greater need of the exercise of firm but gentle authority, than in those of this description. Order, decency, cleanliness, and habits of employment, should be strictly enforced—at the same time a spirit of judicious liberality should exercise itself in the discrimination of the various cases of want, not confining itself to the mere legal supplies, but proportioning the relief to the

occasion. Such was the spirit of primitive christianity, and I see no reason why we should profess to retain its doctrines and not its practice.

Our almshouse is, I am happy to say, about to be removed from Ladyston to a hamlet a little beyond the Pass, on the road to Rynan. The parishes have agreed to join in erecting one building for the reception of all the forest poor, and the neighbouring clergy have consented to form a Committee of Management in conjunction with the magistracy of the district. From these regulations, I anticipate the most beneficial results. The poor ought not to be neglected. To leave them to the cruel and selfish management of low people, who rob the parish to favour some, while others, feeble and helpless, are brow-beaten, and almost scared from the scanty pittance allowed them, is a disgrace upon the wealthy proprietors of the soil. Wherever it can be avoided, such public offices should be withheld from ignorant farmers and mechanics, or at least shared with the richer

and better educated. People who live in ease and plenty in the country, are highly responsible in these matters. The imprudence, the insolence, and the idleness of many of those who claim parish relief, are sufficiently known, and cannot be too severely chastised: it is not of such I speak—it is the infirm, the aged, and the helpless, whose cause is so often and so energetically pleaded in Scripture, who particularly claim the sympathy and liberal assistance of their more fortunate fellow-creatures, and where it is withheld, the blessing of providence cannot rest.

Rynan. Saturday.

I DO not know that I ever took up my pen with so light a heart as at present. I have been here a week, and the whole of it has presented one scene of unalloyed happiness. You will be surprised to learn the cause of my absence from the Brynn at this unusual time. It is to be introduced to and to assist in entertaining Mr. Tempest's eldest sister, who with her aged relative, Lady S——, an old friend of my mother's, has ventured among these mountains, to pay us a long projected visit. Mr. Tempest joined them here on Monday, and only returned to Ladyston this morning. The weather has been so delightful, that we have spent much of our time out of doors. You know I am never wearied with exploring our hills and vales, and I am, perhaps, foolishly proud in exhibiting their unnumbered beauties to our stran-

gers. Miss Tempest I had not seen before ; she did not accompany her father to Ladyston, being abroad at the time. She is handsome and engaging ; very different to her sisters, both in tastes and manners. I am privileged in seeing a great deal of her ; she is an excellent horsewoman, and does not shrink from accompanying me any where. It is delightful to witness the warm attachment which subsists between herself and her brother. But I will not enlarge on any of these subjects, as our strangers, on leaving us, are to visit Ladyston, where, probably, you will find them on your arrival at the Lodge. Your impertinent questions on the trite subject so often discussed, I will not answer yet. Why should you be always building castles in the air for your friend ? My silence you will interpret into a consent to your insinuations. Be it so. They may be nearer the truth, perhaps, than even you yourself seriously imagine. At least, I will not outrage both friendship and candour, by affecting a flat denial. I am most anxious

to see you, conscious that in your faithful breast I shall find a safe depository for all my hopes and fears, my perplexities and anxieties.

Yet, after all, why should I hesitate to say to you now, what must soon come from others, if I do not declare it myself? why should I refuse to open my heart to one who has long and patiently sympathized in my sorrows, and who ought, therefore, to partake in my joys? Let me, then, confirm your conjectures, nor will I disguise from you, that in the prospect of my approaching union with Mr. Tempest, my own heart, as well as my sober reason, assures me, that I am one of the most fortunate of women. For the last two years, in times of the greatest difficulty and distress, I have ever found him a kind and considerate friend; and so unobtrusively, and with such general feeling and modesty, have his numerous acts of kindness towards me been conferred, that the continuance of them, from being soothing and pleasant, has at length become necessary to my happiness. His

presence at the Brynn was the sun which in my fancy has long dispelled the storms and clouds which deformed our domestic hearth, and as the consciousness of his approval often added strength to my almost inexhausted efforts, so did the increasing certainty of his affection, gild with its bright influence many an hour which otherwise might have passed in gloom and despondency. Even before I knew it myself, he had my whole heart. I hope—I am sure at least I shall endeavour—to prove worthy of him. You may imagine the delight of my family, particularly of my dear father. He loves Mr. Tempest as if he was his own son, nor do I think that any thing could have occurred, calculated to give him more real and lasting pleasure. My aunt, as usual, acts strangely—the Governor with a generosity amounting to munificence. But why enlarge on these topics? they are less interesting to me than others of a less worldly nature, the indulgence of which, however, I must postpone till your arrival here.

Rynan.

I AM glad to find, from the increasing number of interrogatories with which your letters abound, that your interest about these secluded regions is not on the wane. Though not much in the humour, I will endeavour to answer some of them. I wish you had been at Rynan yesterday. It was one of the great holidays in this country, and you would have been able to form a fair opinion of the manners and appearance of our mountaineers. The soil of the vallies being generally rich, and that on the hill sides too shallow for the plough, almost the whole of this district is meadow, pasture, and sheep-walk. Here and there you may meet with a little patch of arable, but it is only for home consumption, oatmeal forming a favourite food here, as is the case in most hilly countries. Our farmers

are principally dairymen. Each possesses a few diminutive cows, a large flock of sheep of a small and active breed, and sometimes a herd of goats. These afford a due proportion of milk, from which, considerable quantities of cheese for home use, and butter for sale, are made. The holyday which I mentioned, is held on occasion of the return of that portion of the population of the vale which has spent the summer among the upland pastures and moors. It is an interesting sight to see the pastoral inhabitants of these vallies, as soon as the winter months are gone and the genial sun again pierces the recesses of the hills, sending out the more strong and active of their number, to tend the flocks and herds during their summer feed among the mountains. Their wives and children accompany them, and the day before their departure is generally spent in music and dancing, and greetings from house to house. Ascending from the vales, they separate widely, high among the hills, and spend the whole summer in

hovels, rudely constructed of any materials at hand, and frequently pitched in the wildest and most picturesque spots. Large stones supply the place of tables and chairs, and rushes and heath form their beds: the men tend the flocks and herds, while the women milk and manufacture their winter store with great industry and cleanliness. With the fall of the leaf and the first blasts of the unruly equinox, these aërial wanderers return to their homes, driving before them their not unwilling charges, and exultingly bearing along the summer produce. Their arrival is greeted with general satisfaction;—music, the dance and the feast, welcome them to their winter quarters—the flocks and herds are secured in the inclosures of the vallies, and the winter occupations of carding and spinning their wool, and manufacturing coarse cloths and linens for their own wear, and sometimes for sale, immediately commence.

From this outline, which you will allow is sober and quaint enough to be inserted in a county history, you may form a toler-

able judgment of the kind of people among whom you intend to pass a portion of your time. You will find them obliging, active, and industrious. They retain all those old-fashioned notions of hospitality, and even generosity, which the prevailing rage for refinement is quickly causing to vanish. Rank and station are here still the objects of respect and deference, and being far from the corrupting influence of cities, they hold no tenets averse to the established religion of the state, and no politics but reverence to their king, and obedience to constituted authorities. If we except Ladyston, this is the general character of our mountaineers, and even there, a great change is already perceptible, and a few years quiet exertion on the part of Mr. Tempest, will, no doubt, remove the evil effects of a century's neglect and insubordination. There are not two greater evils to a country than rapid changes in religion, and the non-residence of the owners of the soil. The first destroys moral, as the latter does legal restraint. Thus Rynan is decidedly

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the most orderly and prosperous parish in the whole district, and has generally been accounted so, because for the last two hundred years, the successive lords of the domain have resided in the midst of their tenantry, and the rectors have in no one instance abandoned their flock and their church, to the care of a hired and indifferent shepherd. But I am beginning a subject more likely to display my own eloquence than to afford you entertainment; therefore adieu. My heart is full of other matters.

Ladyston.

AFTER a week, certainly the happiest in my life, spent at Rynan, I have again regained my solitude. Solitude it is not long to continue—retirement, I hope, it will ever be. Delightful thought, that these ancient walls of my ancestors are about receive a mistress, such as will make ample amends for their long deserton—that these joyful meads and peopled pastures—these venerable groves and heathy hills, are again to welcome the tread of rank, beauty, virtue, and again are to be appreciated and cherished for all their native loveliness! Truly the ways of Providence are full of wonder, mercy, and truth. I came hither in sorrow, distress, and doubt—my soul was sick within me.—I hoped almost without hope. And now, in so short a period, what a change! I have all, and more than I could wish—my cup of blessing is

full to the brim, and overflows—my heart swells with the deepest, the liveliest gratitude, to the great Author of all good; and in the midst of my joy I pray for one thing more only—that I may, by his grace, prove deserving of his favour!

Man is a wayward, inconstant, variable being. I read it in the history of my own heart. The consciousness of this should teach him unlimited dependence upon Providence. From the beginning of the world to the present moment—from the revolutions of empires to the petty concerns of private life, all is for the best; the rod of a superintending Being governs the whole; his finger directs events from the greatest to the least.

On reperusing that journal of my thoughts and actions, which since mature age I have unceasingly kept, what a humiliating fluctuation of sentiment does it present! In the beginning I find myself all lightness and gaiety of heart, pursuing eagerly that which I seldom really relished, and hoping every thing

from a scene which was speedily to close.—“ Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments, and let no flower of the spring pass by us. “ Let us crown ourselves with rosebuds before they be withered,” was my doctrine and my practice. Yet still my heart was not always at ease—it was obliged, though unwillingly sometimes, to confess that there was an emptiness, an unsatisfactory feeling attending the world, and the things of the world, which was unaccountable, and that the soul aspired to higher stimulants and higher pleasures. Then came the cloudy day of misfortune and woe—I was taught upon how frail a basis all worldly prosperity was erected—how in one moment it was raised aloft—in the next it disappeared. I was to be torn from all I had hitherto so much valued—all that my heart coveted, though reason sometimes rebelled. What I then thought, the following extract will sufficiently display. It was written at the commencement of a year of affliction, but which has proved, in its result, the

beginning of happiness. “This year sets out disastrously. Farewell, beloved city, with all thy splendors, gaieties, and unnumbered fascinations! The tedium my soul hath sometimes acknowledged, when cloyed with thy very varieties, vanishes, now that I am forced, perhaps for ever, from thy long-accustomed scenes. If I have ever wished to quit thee, the wish departs with the compulsion that drives me hence, and, in spite of myself, rejects all former repinings, and is filled only with the pleasures thou’erst affordest. ’Tis ever thus with man. He is always looking for that he has not, and what in possession he slighted, when obliged to relinquish, he regrets. Farewell, ye gay associates of my lighter hours—adieu, ye ambitious schemes that engaged my more serious thoughts: I leave you all never to return, and bewildered with the strangeness of my fortunes, gazing vacantly upon the dark, and almost hopeless future, I hurry I scarcely know whither—I would not remember why. Heavens! What a dreary prospect spreads before me! What

a contrast will the strange, the wild, the melancholy scenes, that await me, be to a heart susceptible and social as mine ! The splendours, the luxuries, the gaieties of the court to be exchanged for bleak and cold, and barren mountains—for associates but one degree removed above the dumb brutes they tend—for silence and solitude, rendered more horrible by the utter hopelessness of any change ! ”

Such were my meditations, when hurrying from the metropolis to the secluded vallies of the Rhûdol. How different now, my feelings and my exclamations ! Hail, joyful hills, beloved mountains—hail, dear associates and friends, a hundred fold dearer and more valued than those I left—welcome that silence and solitude, which teach me to read myself, and give me time and inclination to converse with Nature and its God ! No : I would not at this moment relinquish the silent halls of Ladyston, its lonely woods and its secluded vale, for the noblest palace and the fairest gardens in the Queen of Cities—I would not receive the smiles of princes—the company

of nobles—the adulation of crowds, in exchange for my friendships and attachments here, though worth, sincerity, and virtue, are their only ornaments. It is pleasant from this my secure retreat to think how like a ship in harbour I am withdrawn from the wild sea of ambition and worldly strife—how in this remote corner of the globe, I have taught my soul to adapt its pleasures to its means, and to feel—deeply feel, that a moderate condition and moderate enjoyments form the ultimatum of our bliss here, and that he who embarks on the wild ocean of uncertainty, in hopes of acquiring more, will infallibly lose all. With the poet I exclaim

Nil dulciss est, bene quam munita tenere
Edita doctrinā sapientum templa serena ;
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ,
Certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,
Nocteis atque dies niti præstante labore
Ad summas emergere opes, rerumque potiri *.

It is not among the least of the many advantages of retired life, that it compels

* Lucretius de rerum Natura, lib. ii.

the mind sometimes to converse with itself: that the high purposes of our creation, as they do occasionally force themselves upon every feeling and enlightened heart, so here they have time to retain and occupy the soul, and so become, or at least have a better chance of becoming, the parents both of good and exalted principles and actions. The unceasing turmoil of a mere worldly life—the agitating excitements of an ambitious course—the frivolities of fashion—the utter worthlessness of what is termed gay life—occupy and fill, to the total neglect of all higher and nobler views, many a mind of which better things might be expected. Here, thanks be to heaven for having so ruled my destiny, I am far from these cares and turmoils—these worldly factions and interests, aptly termed in the wisdom of Solomon, “the violence of winds and the reasonings of men.” Placed in a scene of sober usefulness, I may do my duty in my generation; because remote from the congregated herds of my fellow-creatures, my

field of philanthropy is not contracted—nay, it is rather widened, for I tread in a wilderness which has become so only by neglect, and I carry light and civilization to remote corners, which have been darkened only by the ambition and secular views of my precursors.

How delightful the prospect which is now opening upon me ! when death snatched away from all his sorrows and repinings one of the best of fathers—when those who ought to have held together, sharing and alleviating each other's woes, were severed by the blasting breath of selfishness and false sentiment—when a ruined mansion, and a depopulated and neglected estate were all that was left to receive and to support me—when friends seemed to have withdrawn themselves, and all was dark, gloomy, and helpless around me—still did I teach my soul to have recourse to those sources of comfort which alone can elevate it above the trammels of earthly misfortune : I looked to Him who gave and who could take away ; and I now find that I was not

mistaken in my confidence. I trust, I have been patient under my afflictions, for the Great Giver of all good has restored to me fourfold those blessings which for a time it pleased Him to withhold. Should the beams of his mercy and goodness continue to enlighten and cheer my earthly course, my earnest prayer is, that the whole of my energies may be employed in endeavours to deserve them—that in prosperity I may not forget the wholesome lessons which misfortune has taught me—and that if, under the heavy stroke of affliction, I cultivated a spirit of submission, of resignation and hope—so when brighter days arise, befitting principles may actuate my soul—the warmest sentiments fill and inspire my heart—sentiments of obedience, gratitude, and love.

THE END.

